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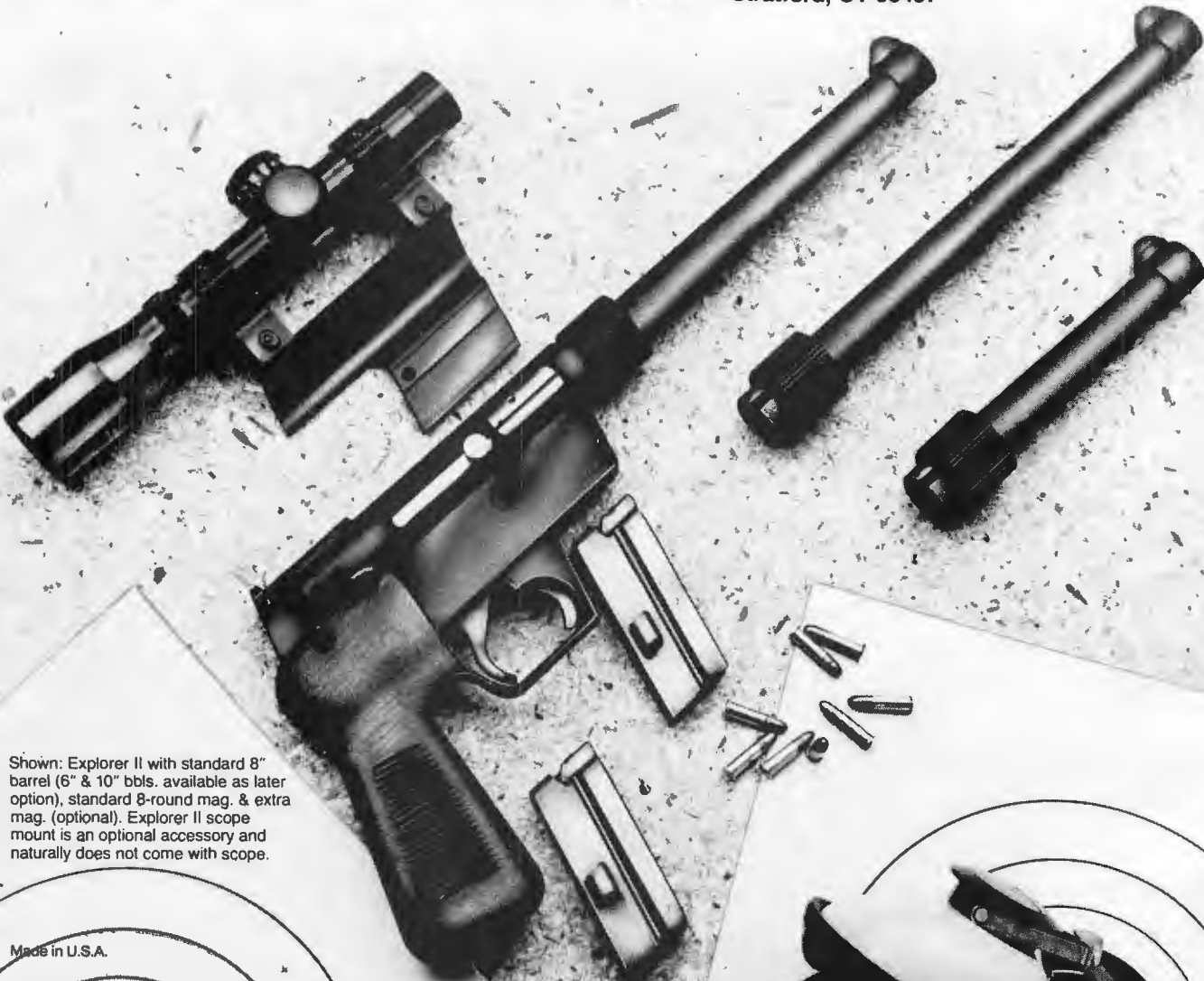
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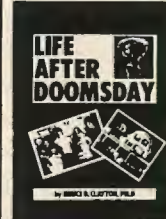
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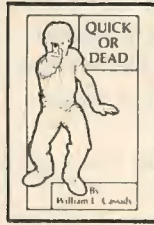
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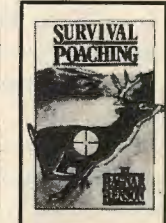
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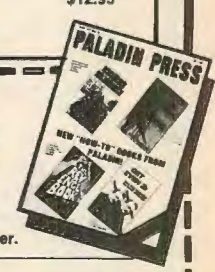
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# EDITOR'S NOTES

**I**T was fitting that Marine Sgt. Billy Gallegos dropped in to visit us in late April.

Gallegos, a Pueblo, Colo., native, was one of the Marine guards who were held hostage by the Iranians and returned when President Reagan took office.

Believe all the stories you've read or heard about the barbaric treatment of the hostages — Gallegos says it was *that* bad. "They beat us a lot," he said. "And every time we hit one of them back they'd tie us to chairs and beat us — with their hands, fists and this rubber thing they used."

Gallegos, who went from 165 down to 135 pounds in Iranian captivity, said the food was worse. "It was mostly a rice diet and it was difficult to keep going on it." Occasionally the Iranians would cover the rice with a foul-smelling and even fouler-tasting sauce but usually it was just rice. For protein Gallegos says some hostages caught the cockroaches they shared their cells with and crushed them up in the rice.

"After a while we just ignored them (the Iranians)," said Gallegos. "That was what pissed them off the most."

It was interesting to have Gallegos here at the same time that reactions to the "What Price Glory?" article by Jim Monaghan and Robyn Evans which ran in the June issue were just starting to arrive. In that article the authors focused on the POW/MIAs still unaccounted for by the North Vietnamese and abandoned to their unknown fates by the Carter administration and too many Americans.

But our mail indicates that there are some Americans out there who care about our men left behind.

One is Thomas W. Hebert, who publishes the *Vietnam War Newsletter*, P.O. Box 122, Collinsville, CT 06022.

Hebert is trying to get a "Red, White and Blue Ribbon Campaign" underway so those Americans who care can let our government know that it is time to bring home any live Americans and to force the North Vietnamese to account for those who are dead.

"The American people have to demonstrate to President Reagan their strong desire to have the POW/MIA issue resolved — a desire as strong as that of bringing home the hostages from Iran," wrote Hebert. "I believe that Vietnam veterans have a special responsibility to do all we can for our fellow fighting men (and their families) who did not return home with us. By helping them, we will be helping ourselves and our country.

"The Vietnam veterans need a cause to bring us together — I believe this is it."

Hebert has ribbons available for anyone who wants them. For each dollar donated, you'll get two ribbons. The funds collected from sale of the ribbons will be used to continue the campaign and there will be no profit in it. Hebert also plans to offer logo pins, bumper stickers and T-shirts or provide the addresses of other organizations that have those items available.

*Soldier of Fortune* cannot think of a better cause to support.

**WHILE HE WAS IN BOULDER** Marine Sgt. Billy Gallegos picked up one of our latest Phoenix Associates (P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306) T-shirts. You can see the front design. The T-shirt is yellow with red design and letters and the price is \$7.95 (plus \$1.25 postage and handling). The motto on the back is: "Let Me Win Your Hearts And Minds, Or I'll Burn Your Damn Huts Down." Gallegos, a SOF reader since he entered the Marine Corps, couldn't attend the first SOF convention but will be at the second this fall in Scottsdale, Ariz.



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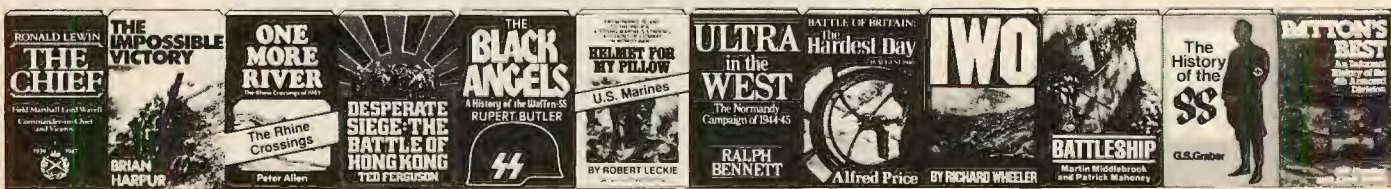
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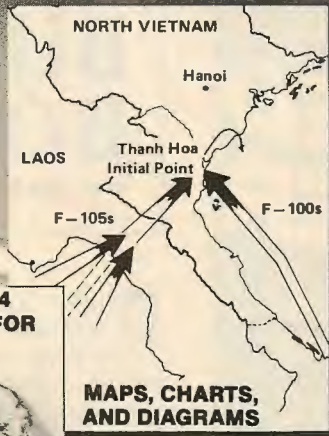
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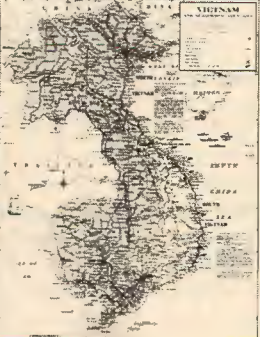
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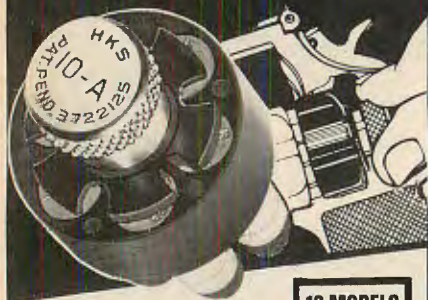
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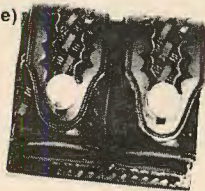
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# BULLETIN BOARD

by Bob Poos



## DRAFT-DODGING TAUGHT HERE ...

The community of Berkeley, Calif., has never been famous as a hotbed of patriotism, but now, at least in SOF's view, it has gone just a little too far.

In what is thought to be the first act of its kind, the Berkeley Board of Education has passed a resolution that will require high-school students to take a course which includes instruction in how to avoid (dodge) the draft.

Said the prime mover behind the measure, one Anna de Leon, "It appears we have a President who learned nothing from our experience in Southeast Asia. Now we are getting involved again in struggles against 'liberation' in this hemisphere and President Reagan will want young Berkeley males to fight there."

The instruction will be given for one or two weeks during history and government classes. It will include visiting speakers who will discuss how to avoid draft registration, strategy for avoiding prosecution, conscientious-objector status and current legal challenges to the draft.

SOF thought readers might like to make their views known to Ms. de Leon. She may be reached by calling her at home, (415) 845-0770, or writing: Ms. Anna de Leon, Director, Board of Education, 2134 Grove St., Berkeley, CA 94704.

## ARMY DISPLAY CANCELLED ...

A mini-protest by a so-called peace group caused cancellation of an Army recruiting display recently at a Boulder, Colo., shopping center.

The Army had hoped to set up in Crossroads Shopping Center, in the heart of Boulder, a display including jeeps, armor, artillery, radio equipment, other hardware and men and officers from Fort Carson, Colorado's Fourth Mechanized Infantry Division. It was to be in conjunction with the Army's "Be All You Can Be" week.

But a group that calls itself the New American Movement made a few phone calls and Crossroads management called the thing off even before the threatened picketing protest took place.

A recruiter, who asked not to be named, said: "I thought it was phony of them to cancel it, because it cost several thousand dollars to get it [the material] there and back. This [Boulder] is not an easy place to recruit because of the college [University of Colorado], and we were really counting on this."

Another recruiter said, "We've gotten a lot of angry phone calls from people who were mad it was pulled. Maybe this will backfire, if patriotic people get up and get mad."

Some of the protesters were disappointed that the display was not there when they appeared to picket. Mary Sell, a member of the group, said, "I was shocked and disappointed. I didn't think we had that much influence."

The major figure in making the decision is a man named Steve Kaiser, a Crossroads executive. SOF thought readers might like to contact him and give him their thoughts on the matter. He wouldn't talk to SOF. His phone number is (303) 444-0722 and his address is Business Office, Crossroads Shopping Center, Boulder CO 80302. SOF couldn't locate Ms. Sell or we'd be delighted to publish her address too.

## ANNUAL REUNION NOTES ...

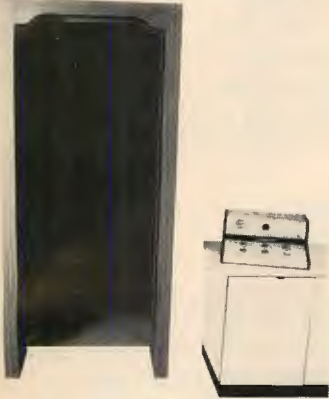
The 517th Parachute Regimental Combat Team, which includes the 460th Artillery and 596th Combat Engineers, will hold its annual reunion August 13, 14 and 15 at the Dutch Inn, Orlando, Fla. Contact is Bill Lewis, P.O. Box 101, Trimont, MN 56176.

The First Special Service Force Association will hold its 35th annual reunion at the Hotel Vancouver, Vancouver, B.C., August 13-15. Contacts are Larry Story, reunion chairman, 12807 Southridge Drive, Surry, B.C. (604) 591-9291, or Bill Story, executive secretary, FSSF Assn., 11815 Quarter Horse Ct., Oakton, VA 22124. The FSSF was an elite WWII infantry unit, half of whose members were Canadians and half Americans.

Office of Strategic Services (OSS) Detachment 101, which served in Burma during WWII, will hold its National

*Continued on page 64*

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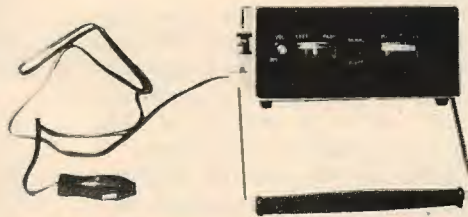
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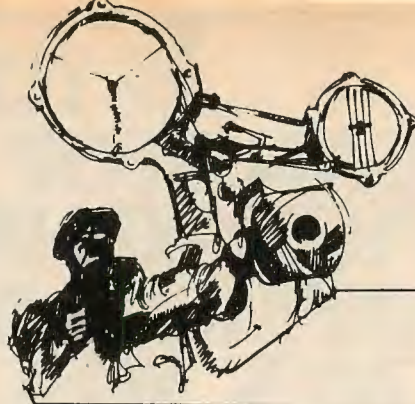
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## FLAK

### C-RATS NOT BEER ...

Sirs:

In reference to Full Auto (American Ingenuity) by Sgt. Gary Paul Johnston (SOF, January '81), as a former doorgunner with 29 Oak Leaf Clusters on my Air Medal, I am thoroughly incensed at the statement made therein that "a beer can was brazed to the left side of most doorgunners' M60s." If you can produce a photograph of an M60 with a beer can brazed to it, I'll eat it!

(1) Beer cans were not that plentiful in 'Nam. (2) Beer cans are not the right size nor sturdy enough. What do you do when the beer can brazed to your M60 bends out of shape and becomes unserviceable?

The type of can almost universally used was the C-Ration can. The large main-course size (not the fruit) would fit exactly the magazine bracket riveted on the left side of the M60 receiver. The can would clamp on quite snugly.

A full can was preferred, because an empty one would not withstand the pounding from thousands of rounds of 7.62mm ammo being dragged over it and into the weapon.

The most popular meal for this purpose was "Ham and Motherfuckers" (lima beans). No one in his right mind used to eat that stuff, so a more useful purpose was found for it.

Sincerely,  
Sgt. David M. Evans  
APO, New York, New York

### HAWK IN HAND ...

Sirs:

In Bulletin Board, SOF, May '81, you stated on page 91: "The Army tried to buy the improved Hawk missile but the request was denied in favor of the Patriot. That was 10 years ago, and today we still don't have either the improved Hawk or the Patriot, and won't for several more years." I don't know where you got your information but it is entirely wrong.

I got out of the U.S. Army in 1977 as a Spec. 5 with a 24E30 MOS, an improved Hawk fire-control-systems maintenance job. I completed an improved Hawk/AN/TPO29 guided-missile-simulator maintenance transition course on 17 July 1974. I know for a

fact that we have had improved Hawks since January 1974. The missile is now in Germany and Korea. When I got out it was already considered outdated. So your info is wrong.

Sincerely yours,  
Wayne Keck  
Milford, Ohio

*Thanks for your correction. You're right — our source was wrong. — The Eds.*

### HOODED TYRANTS ...

Sirs:

When we left Vietnam, we left some good friends and ARVN soldiers behind to fight against the NVA. Vietnam was lost. Rather than be imprisoned, tortured or put to death, as many ARVN as could got out of the 'Nam and followed us to this land of opportunity and freedom.

But free opportunity was not to be for some of our Vietnamese friends who may have been our comrades in arms. Here in Seabrook, Texas, near Houston, they are again being denied freedom of choice by tyrants — not communists this time — but men parading in hooded uniforms and cammies who claim to be patriots.

Do we as soldiers, who speak of just causes, who left comrades behind, who fought for "freedom" in Vietnam, condone these acts by the tyrannic Ku Klux Klan? Does SOF condone it? Why don't we support the beleaguered Vietnamese people in Seabrook? This time it's not the NVA or communists who are driving them out — but we can again blame the politicians for allowing them to be driven out.

Hopefully, someday all tyrants will be vanquished, and all who have fought against them and lost their lives will be vindicated.

Sincerely,  
Ricardo Castillo  
Wharton, Texas

*Enclosed with Ricardo Castillo's letter was a clipping from the 16 March 1981 Houston Chronicle which described an incident in which a shrimp boat carrying Ku Klux Klansmen, some robed and some armed, circled Clear Creek Channel near Seabrook in protest*

*Continued on page 68*

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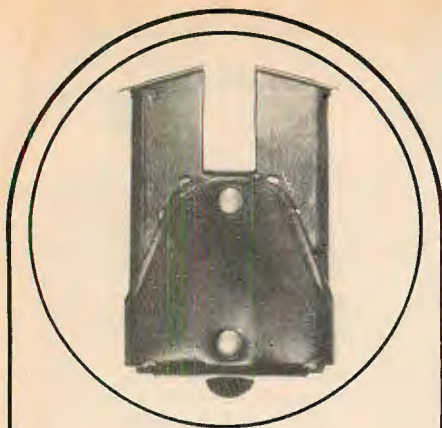
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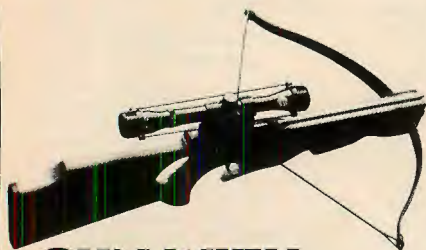


### Ken Hackathorn

A few years back, people thought it was impossible to reload a pistol in one second or less. But now, IPSC hot-shots have proved them wrong. I remember when a two-second reload with the Colt .45 auto was considered state of the art. Then some top shooters set out to get the magazine change down to less than that and, over the last couple of years, we have seen some unbelievable displays of speed loading.

I first saw a demonstration of fast reloading by John Davis of Litchfield, Ill. Davis worked out with a Crondex timer. He could fire a shot, change magazines and fire another shot in 1.2 seconds with ease, and often had faster times.

original — method is to pull the pistol back slightly from the Weaver stance and to pivot it slightly in the firing hand so that the finger comes off the trigger as the weak hand goes for the spare magazine. Don't press the magazine catch button until the spare magazine is on its way to the pistol butt. This ensures that the spare ammo is safely at hand before you drop the remaining cartridges with the old magazine. While the pistol is still near eye level, the spare magazine starts up toward the magazine well as the old one falls free. Slam the fresh magazine home and slide the weak hand back into support position. As the pistol goes back on target, press the trigger as the sights



## GUN WITH A BOW

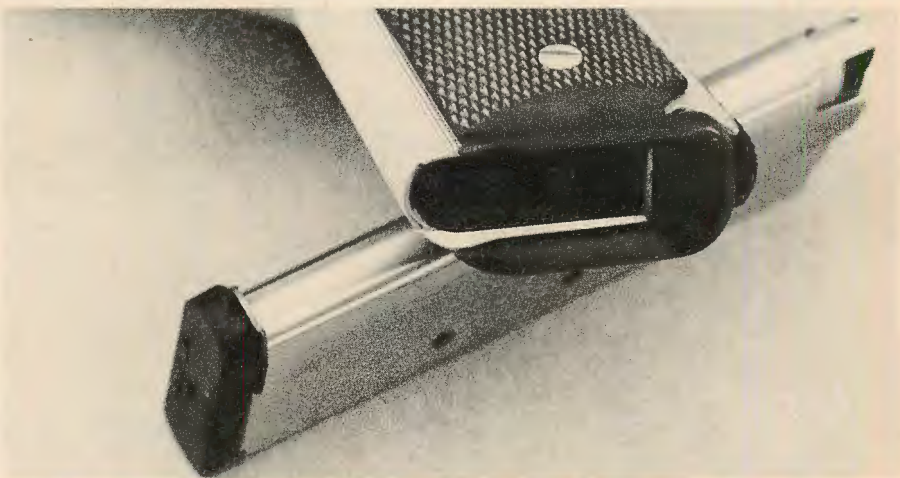
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Wilson's Gunshop supplies E-Z Loader add-on devices for faster speedloading of 1911-style autos. Note funnel-like effect for fast, easy magazine changes. Price \$9.95 each. Photo: Ken Hackathorn

Others began developing the art as well. Part of getting down to a seven-second-or-less "El Presidente" requires a super-fast reload. Now the big boys turn out speedloads around one second with ease. Times of one second or less by shooters like Ross Seyfried, Nick Pruitt and Raul Walters are well documented. These men slam magazines so fast that when viewed on film, it looks as if the pistol has broken and a part fallen off.

The fast-reload technique for the .45 auto now has a cult-like following in practical-shooting circles. Two techniques are popular. The first — and

align on it.

The second method, made popular by Ray Chapman, is similar to the first, but the pistol is drawn back closer to the body and the elbow is locked against the lower ribs. Hold the pistol over on its side somewhat, not enough to slow down the dumping motion of the magazine, but enough so that the spare magazine is locked into the magazine well. Both systems are popular and work well.

A beveled magazine well is the key to speedloading the 1911 auto. To make

*Continued on page 70*



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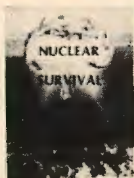
Long out of print, this definitive study of one of the Free World's finest combat rifles is once again available. Descriptions of mechanical functioning, operation and stripping of the rifle are highly detailed and accompanied by nearly 200 large, clear photos. Model variations and accessories such as L.A.R. light and paratrooper models and bipods, flash-hiders and infrared sniping scopes are also covered. A comprehensive overview of a truly legendary weapon.



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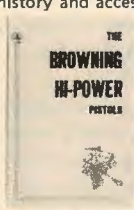
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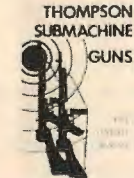
It may be fun to win a trophy shooting at targets on the range, but it's a whole new ballgame when the target shoots back. The author's concern is with combat survival, not combat competition. A compilation of combat shooting data for handguns, shotguns and rifles. Whether you're a police officer, foot soldier, storekeeper or homeowner, this book can help you to earn the highest ranking title in combat shooting — survivor.



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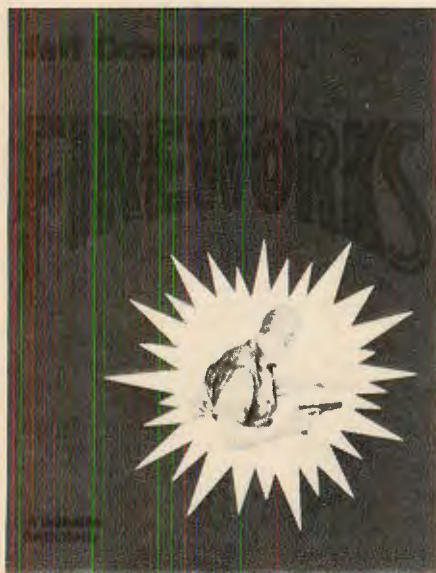
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# IN REVIEW



**FIREWORKS.** By Jeff Cooper. The Janus Press, P.O. Box 578, Rogue River, OR 97537. 1980. Illustrated. 192 pp. \$19.95. Review by Bob Poos.

**P**ROSPECTIVE purchasers of Jeff Cooper's latest book, *Fireworks*, should be aware that it is not an entirely original production. Of the 25 short stories, essays and recollections, 14 are reprints from magazines — three of them from SOF.

Nor is it a gun book like Cooper's earlier *Cooper on Handguns*, although there are some articles in it dealing primarily with technical firearms information.

The material ranges from "The Deadly American" — first published under that title in SOF in 1976 — a treatise on America's violent past, particularly in the West, to "Aguardientes De Agave," a dissertation on the delights of the Mexican liquor of that name.

However, reprint or original, personal reminiscence or essay on gun control, the writing is strictly Jeff Cooper's — a style not likely to be mistaken.

Some SOF readers may find it a trifle scholarly for their tastes, for Cooper is an extremely intelligent, refined and superbly educated man. Others will find it delightful. I personally enjoyed it (although I found myself making frequent trips to the dictionary and I have a better-than-average vocabulary).

Be that as it may, Cooper couldn't write in any other fashion even if he wanted to. And his legion of fans wouldn't want him to.

Cooper's personality — scholarly, courtly Gentleman of the Old School — permeates this slim volume. That is the best thing about it. Jeff Cooper is a most unusual man who has spent most of his life dealing in or with violent pursuits, and absorbing even a little of his philosophy and personality is a worthwhile pursuit.

I found the most enjoyable chapters of the book those dealing with Cooper's recollections from the time he was a boy, his experiences as an officer of Marines and his adventures in Latin American countries while helping their duly constituted authorities or more responsible citizens improve self-defense and security capabilities.

His interview with Hans Ulrich Rudel, a fiercer who was the most highly decorated soldier of the German army in WWII, is fascinating.

But one wonders why Cooper included some of the material he did. For example, his elegy, "To An American Serving in Vietnam," was an eloquent, moving tribute to the U.S. fighting man at a time when most writers condemned him as a bloodthirsty savage intent upon destroying the gentle, peace-loving peoples of Southeast Asia and ravaging their lands. That is, it was at the time. Today it seems a little dated and, perhaps, quaint.

Yet it is obviously one of Cooper's favorites, and this book is an anthology of his own best-liked works.

The book is handsomely illustrated with 14 drawings by Fred Lucas, a leading artist on Western themes.

*Bob Poos, an expert with the handgun himself, is SOF's Executive Editor.*

**THE BATTLE OF HAMBURG.** By Martin Middlebrook. Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10017. 1981. 424 pp. Illustrated. \$17.95. Review by John Metzger.

**M**MILITARY historian Martin Middlebrook provides readers with a detailed, harrowing description of

what it was like to be a victim of the massive air strikes over Hamburg, Germany, in July 1943.

Not only does Middlebrook describe the battle vividly, but he goes back almost 30 years and explains the developments in strategic bombing that eventually led to one of the Allies' greatest successes in WWII.

The book is well-illustrated with maps and photos, and Middlebrook offers an elaborate analysis of Allied success and German failure.

This complex narrative will furnish the WWII history buff with a new understanding of "firestorm raid" strategy — and its results.

**MISSILES OF THE WORLD.** By Michael J. Taylor. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1980. 152 pp. Amply illustrated in black and white. \$14.95. Review by Fred Reed.

**A** reasonably good, compact reference book on missiles in service or under development throughout the world. On the average, each missile receives a half-page of text in addition to a photograph. Included is information on size, guidance, range, warhead, means of propulsion, development and deployment.

**DON'T BECOME THE VICTIM: A Guide to Effective Anticrime Measures, By A Reformed Convict.** By Marcus Wayne Ratledge. Paladin Press, Ingram Book Co., 347 Reedville Dr., Nashville, TN 37217. 1981. 105 pp. \$6.00. Review by Fred Reed.

**A** cleanly written, well-informed guide to avoiding the commonest crimes: auto theft, burglary, robbery, con games, shoplifting, murder, rape and vice crime. Ratledge considers each crime from the criminal's point of view, explaining what the criminal looks for in choosing victims and what is likely to deter him. His advice is practical and, in most cases, requires little investment. The book offers advice on protecting both individuals and businesses.



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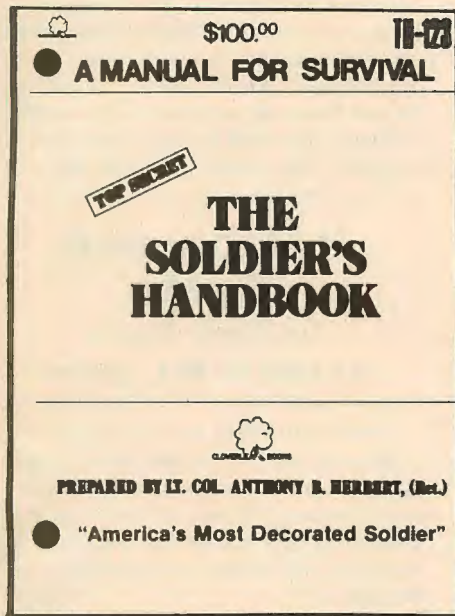
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Los Angeles Herald Examiner, Wednesday, Aug. 27

The book's already a big hit among old military hands, narcotics folk, cops, corporations and individuals with more than just a little to protect. And, promises Herbert, the book will be updated periodically. Which might prove necessary. After all, you never know when another Noble Cause may come loping around the next corner. □

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# I Was There

by Jan Schwarzenberg  
as told to M.L. Jones

On 13 April 1976, Jan Schwarzenberg was working as a security officer for a large university in Chicago and taking classes toward his undergraduate degree. As he tells it:

I'D been studying for hours at the campus library, and at about 11:00 p.m. I headed for a restaurant across the street for a late-night snack.

The restaurant's night manager, Charlie, was putting money into an envelope for someone whom I assumed to be his night-deposit man. When I stepped up to the register to chat with Charlie, the man told me to move around to his other side. I looked down and saw the cocked .32 nickel revolver in his hand on the counter.

I moved next to Charlie, who was still stuffing money. The man told me to empty my wallet. His revolver pointed at my stomach as I pulled it out. I made damn sure he did not see the badge in my wallet, and dropped the money on the counter.

Charlie was taking his time getting the money together. (I later found out that the cook had seen the robbery go down

and had called the police.) Charlie was purposely stalling for time.

Meanwhile, I tried to decide what to do. The man was about three feet from me. I thought of slamming my hand between the hammer and the frame — but the gun was now pointing at Charlie and I did not want to take a chance with his life. In addition, the man had about two inches and 50 pounds on me.

Just then, the getaway car drove up, halting in the bus stop outside, and the driver looked anxiously into the restaurant. Charlie had run out of money. The hold-up man ordered us into the back of the restaurant and fled. But the passenger door to the getaway car was locked — and the first squad car pulled up.

Denny Eichler of the 20th District hopped out and stood in the middle of four lanes of traffic with his gun out and pointed. His partner, Tom Weyland, took cover behind the trunk of the squad car.

I now came barreling out of the restaurant. (Denny told me later he almost blew me away because it took

him a minute to figure out who the robber was.) The driver of the getaway car was still at the wheel, about to roar off.

I ran up behind the car, threw open the door on the driver's side and hauled him out. I put him up against the car and frisked and cuffed him. Then I looked across the roof of the car and saw that the robber still had his gun. I ducked and Denny cocked. The man dropped his weapon.

It took two years to go to trial, but we got a conviction. Robert Barnett was sentenced to eight years in Joliet State Prison. At the time of the robbery he had been out on bond — for armed robbery. Incidentally, the driver was released. Insufficient probable cause.

## It Happened To Me

by Steve Byers  
as told to M.L. Jones

Until April 1979, Steve Byers, an American, was in Rhodesia as a security guard on a farm called Lesbury Estates, approximately 15 miles from Rusape. On a morning that started like any other, he made his first contact with terrorists. As he tells it:

IT was 0530 on 16 March. Because a light mist was falling, I decided to put the canvas top on our Armadillo, an



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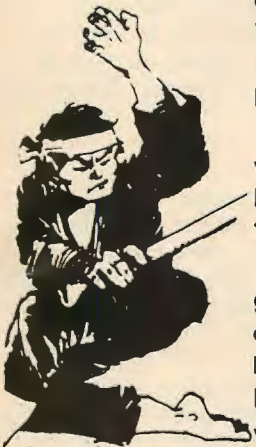
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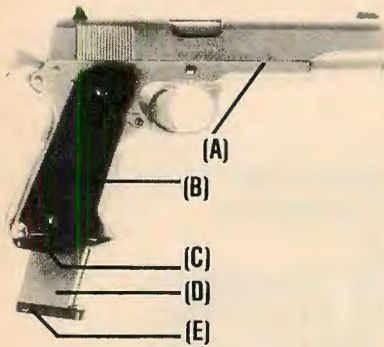
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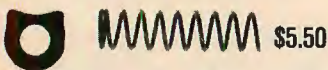
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armored Land Rover, which we used when we checked the security of our farm boundaries. I took Moses, our compound policeman, with me so he could operate the mobile radio while I drove. He had been on the other side once—but became disillusioned by the murder of women and children by his terrorist companions.

By 0600 we were running our usual route on the Willows Road to the Macheke Bridge. The bridge had been blown by terrors only a few hours after Dave Crawley, another Yank, and I had crossed it on a recent patrol late one night. Now it was intact, so we headed for Urmston Barns and Paddock No. 5 to check the fence line for signs of last night's stock thefts. It was a beautiful, fresh, clean morning, but it was difficult staying on the slippery roads.

At 0630, as I approached the gum-tree plantation in the Urmston Paddock, all hell broke loose. An RPG-7 ripped past me from my right and tracers exploded from the brush on both sides of me—it looked like the 4th of July. The rocket passed over our heads and AK-47s crackled, shattering the morning stillness. I halted about 40 yards from the terrors' ambush position and attempted to fire the cannons mounted on the Armadillo: they failed. I tried to get Moses to use the radio, but he was too terrified.

It was time to leave. I turned left off the road through some small gum trees, went past a fence and back onto the road, where I stopped. I couldn't fire



Steve Byers returns to home base after nine days in Rhodesian bush. Weapon is FN FAL.

back with the top on. I finally got Moses to radio camp—no reply.

When we reached the compound at 0730, we found our boss BS-ing with a newly arrived army unit. He hadn't turned on his radio that morning. I told him and the soldiers about the ambush and showed them the dings on the Armadillo. We returned to the ambush site but the terrors had bombshelled.

Later that day, we moved into the Tribal Trust Land (TTL) on info we'd received. A group of terrors was spotted crossing from the Wakefield area across the Macheke into Dowa.

After we set up our ambush position, everything happened at once. We spotted three terrors walking into an open field. Their comrades were still hiding in the bush. Suddenly, two African women ran out, yelling, "Myana, myana (run, run)!" We dropped two of the men instantly. The third was hit, but luckier than his comrades. He, the two bodies and the two women were given accommodation at the Rusape British South Africa Police (BSAP) Headquarters.

When I returned to Lesbury, I remembered that last night I had been alone, walking the fence line across from Dowa in the same area as the ambush. How close had I been to the terrors?

Last year I learned that Moses was killed in an ambush along the Willows Road leading to the Macheke Bridge. He was a good man.

**I**f you have a combat or adventure story for "It Happened to Me" or "I Was There," triple-space type it and send it to SOF, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306, Attn: M.L. Jones. All stories should be 500 words or less. Upon publication, SOF will become owner of all publication rights. Submitted articles are subject to editing and revision, although their content and theme will not be changed.

Photos (with captions and credits) are also helpful. Captions should be typed on a separate sheet of paper and keyed to each photograph.

Enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope so we can notify you of acceptance or return your story. Article payment is \$50, upon publication. All entrants will receive an SOF patch.





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**WARNING!!!**

# THE CRASH IS COMING...AND SO ARE RUNAWAY INFLATION AND CIVIL TURMOIL! WILL A DICTATORSHIP AND GUN CONFISCATION BE NEXT?

"Historically, other nations have followed this pattern! America is rapidly heading the same way. What makes us believe that we can escape?" . . . NOW cautions international lecturer-consultant and economist Hans J. Schneider in his new 288 page book, **TIMELY AND PROFITABLE HELP FOR TROUBLED AMERICANS**. Written by one who has personally gone through all of this before, it is the **RIGHT** book at the **RIGHT** time—a lifesaver for the American people in this hour. In addition to his writings, many speeches in almost 100 countries as well as radio and television appearances have already stirred millions around the world.

How would you like to live in a nation where: A wheelbarrow of money barely buys a loaf of bread and prices on restaurant menus are meaningless because they jump higher while one is eating the meal.

Mr. Schneider comes from a country which, not long ago, experienced this economic nightmare of runaway inflation.

We are NOW facing worse times in America. Unfortunately, most people aren't ready. The dollar has been devalued somewhere between 75% and 90% since 1940. Inflation and taxes already consume most of your income. U.S. taxpayers are now on the hook for at least \$7.5 trillion. Your personal share exceeds \$150,000. Add to this a heavily margined stock market and a loan/deposit ratio in our banks at a similar level to the one just before the Great Depression, and you will see why we are living on borrowed time. But are YOU primed for what's ahead???

**TIMELY AND PROFITABLE HELP FOR TROUBLED AMERICANS** hits the bull's-eye! In it survival expert Hans J. Schneider reveals his proven plan for YOUR freedom and survival in the midst of economic and civil turmoil.

An extraordinary life uniquely qualified Hans to write it **JUST FOR TIMES LIKE THESE!** He endured much physical suffering and privation under two dictatorships, including 5 years under Communism. As his country struggled through another economic and political crash, a serious illness almost took his life. His father, a former industrialist, lost about \$10 million overnight, was imprisoned and told that he would be shot the next day.

As thousands of a disarmed populace were murdered, conditions were so severe that they had to arrive at ingenious ways to survive, and solve food and clothing problems . . . let Mr. Schneider tell you about it.

Having survived terribly adverse circumstances many times, he knows first hand what worked and what did not. Why endure like hardships if you can learn from a man of such caliber? This invaluable knowledge will help you in similar times ahead.

Chapter 19, "Emergency Short-Term Survival," alone can save the lives of you and your loved ones. It is a crash course in the most essential areas if time is of the essence and things are caving in around you. In it the author gives you the best food tests derived from his own experience and in-depth research of various survival manuals. Knowledge of these tests is a MUST. The same lifesaving chapter will show you what to do when you get lost in the wild country, or if you were relocated from where you NOW live, and how to provide almost instant shelter and heat. You will receive vital information on survival hunting, unusual remedies, first aid, and orientation. Lists of essential items for the survival kit (most of which can be obtained locally and easily carried with you in times of emergency) are included.

- Now discover how you can:
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  - \* Live simply for LESS and enjoy it MORE.
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- . . . and much, MUCH more.

**DO YOU KNOW???** What essential provisions to store, and how some can be used for barter? . . . What weed has a tremendous healing action for wounds and sores (page 45)? . . . Which animals are the most productive, economical and easiest to care for? . . . What advantages the Southern Hemisphere has to offer? . . . Why Hitler's onrushing military might never invaded Switzerland? . . . Why big cities will be places of increased terror in the coming years? . . . What usually follows gun registration? . . . Which investments will be a disaster in the near future? (Believe it or not, but the funds of many Americans are tied up in these.) . . . Why your savings accounts could be wiped out overnight?

Find the answers in **180** different concise sections. You will also read about alternate lifestyles, weaponry, and defense tactics; 6 simple, inexpensive ways to preserve your own food (one using just a needle and string! page 47); and what is even more important for your physical survival than merely storing food (see pages 214 and 248-249!).

Are you sick of it all? The rat race, pressures of modern-day living? Do you ever long for independence, your own home in the country with peace and quiet? **THIS IS THE BOOK FOR YOU!**

You'll learn how you can wisely select the right place to live in the stormy times ahead, using the 3 "acid tests," his own unique, proven approach—just like Mr. Schneider did! He lives in a beautiful place situated in the mountains by a spring-fed creek without utility bills, polluted air, chemicalized food, and noise.

Ever considered moving to another land? The author, who has lived abroad and travelled in nearly 100 countries, gives you the facts you need to know before incurring the formidable expense and effort of emigrating. He even explores yachting as a means of survival and a way to see and live all over the world.

In short, you'll discover in this book how to live better today and be more prepared for tomorrow.

### NEWSPAPER AND READER COMMENTS

- \* "Sympathy and concern for an American populace headed toward what he feels is another period of 'hard times' prompted Hans J. Schneider to write **Timely and Profitable Help for Troubled Americans**."—The Mail Tribune, Medford, OR.
- \* "It is the best book I have read on the subject."—Dr. Marjorie Fry, Editor, Castle Rock, CO.



The amazing Hans J. Schneider sets out on another hunt in the "backyard" of his mountain hideaway.

\* "Timely . . . is a good prescription for those of us who no longer expect any help from the failing institutions of this world and recognize that we must work out our own salvation—physical, mental and spiritual."—Dr. John R. Andrews, M.D., Ellijay, GA.

No wonder, the 1st edition enjoyed such an overwhelming demand from across the nation that it sold out within a matter of months. Now the 2nd, enlarged edition also features "Recipes from Our Mountain Home" and "Health Hints" which helped his wife, in the terminal stage of cancer 6 years ago, to survive and enjoy life today.

For just \$6.95 plus 75¢ postage and handling, it can be yours—truly a bargain if you consider that this book was the result of 2 years of hard work and Mr. Schneider's hourly consultation fee is in the 3 figure bracket. (People around the world seek his advice on a wide range of subjects—should you desire to set up personal consultations with him, contact us.)

You may also wish Mr. Schneider's other books. **FLYING TO BE FREE**, "one of the most daring, exciting and life changing true air adventure stories ever written," has a full-color cover, over 100 photos/illustrations, 256 pages and sells for \$9.95. Hans was among the first German pilots licensed after WWII, trained by famous air aces. In this book he recounts his early barnstorming days, a very dangerous aviation mission through war-torn Europe into Africa, and some highlights of his world travels.

**MASTERS OF LEGALIZED CONFUSION AND THEIR PUPPETS**, an undisputed eye-opener written without compromise for only \$1.45, completes the set. All 3 books can now be obtained for only \$17.95 postpaid (you save \$2.65!) by taking advantage of this special offer. Prompt shipment guaranteed.

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# ADVENTURE QUARTERMASTER

by Cynthia E.D. Kite



## POWER PACKER ...

*Armament Systems Products, Unltd.* produces a highly specialized shoulder holster for the Ingram MAC 10 and MAC 11 submachine gun or semiautomatic which it claims is the fastest for this type of weapon. Designated the SMZ/X, the rig is made of a moisture-proof, dense polyethylene and features adjustable straps to more comfortably accommodate the addition of special attachments. Depending upon the physical size of the wearer, even large attachments (noise suppressor, 32-round magazine) may be carried without sacrificing concealment.

An interesting safety feature of the SMZ/X is that the weapon won't fit properly into the holster if it is cocked. The rig is no longer classified "restricted," which means it is no longer necessary to go through the formality of signing a procurement application before purchase.

Suggested retail price for the holster is \$47.50 and information may be obtained by writing to *Armament Systems Products, Unltd.*, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 18595-SGN, Atlanta, GA 30326.



## ALL-AROUND ANSWER ...

*Break-Free Division, San/Bar Corp.* announces that the Army has recently adopted "Break-Free CLP" for the Tri-Services. It was the only product to meet military-weapons experts' post-Vietnam purchase description outlining the need for *one* product as a combination cleaner, lubricant and preservative for all small arms, all tank cannon and all large-caliber weapons. Break-Free CLP removes lead, carbon and various firing residues, lubricates the metal parts against wear and protects them from rust and other corrosion. In addition, tests have shown that, after removing 98 percent of the firing residue, it actually continues removing dirt for some time, without harm to metal or wood finishes.

Retail prices range from \$1.49 for 2/3 ounce to \$9.75 for a pint and Break-Free CLP is also available in gallon and five-liter sizes for refills or large-volume use. For more information contact *Break-Free Division, San/Bar Corp.*, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 11787, Santa Ana, CA 92711.



## OD BINOCs ...

*Fujinon Optical, Inc.* offers a marine binocular which they designate the Meibo 8x30 MTR (Military Type, Rubber). The binocular is thickly coated with olive-drab rubber. It is shockproof, submersibly waterproof and features eyepiece and lens covers and a built-in reticle. Compact and weighing only 1.5 pounds, it still offers an eight-power magnification, high brightness and a distortion-free image.

The 8x30 MTR retails for \$315 with carrying case or \$300 without. For more information contact *Fujinon Optical, Inc.*, Special Products Division, Dept. SOF, 672 White Plains Rd., Scarsdale, NY 10583.

## QUESTION OF LEGALITY ...

In the June issue of SOF, an error was made in the S.H.O.T. Show coverage of *Ithaca Gun Company* (see p. 65). Their eight-shot M37 has a barrel length of 20 inches, not 29½ inches, which is its *overall* length. In addition, the company's five-shot model is *not* restricted to military and police only, since the barrel length is 18½ inches (making it just long enough for civilian ownership). The overall length is 27-7/8 inches.

Please excuse the numerical confusion. For information about the purchase of *either* weapon, contact the company at Dept. SOF, Gun Shop Hill, Ithaca, NY 14850.



## WALKING STRONG ...

*Chippewa Shoe Co.* has designed a military survival boot to meet government requirements for footgear equal to the extremes of wilderness fighting, climbing, hiking and skiing. Built rugged to endure extended exposure to the elements, "Model 990 Wilderness Survival Boot" features a nail-reinforced Vibram unit sole, foam-padded leather lining, leather and rubber midsoles and a sweatproof, channeled-leather insole. The construction is leather Goodyear welting, the upper is six-ounce black-chrome, tanned leather and the seams are chain-stitched with nylon thread and cemented. In addition, the blocked toe and grooved heel accept cable-type ski bindings.

This is a serious boot designed for serious use. Presently issued to Special Forces units, the 990 is now available for the suggested retail price of \$135 from *Chippewa Shoe Co.*, Dept. SOF, Chippewa Falls, WI 54729.

## SILVER MINIATURES ...

*The American Historical Foundation* is introducing the first series in its "Sterling Silver Miniature Arms Collection," which will consist of nine WWII miniature knives — each crafted in solid sterling silver and available on a systematic-acquisition plan.

The first knife in the series is a four-inch miniature of the WWII Fairbairn-Sykes Fighting Knife (see "Rebirth of a Classic," SOF, June '81, p. 68), which was used by American, British, Canadian and other Allied units.

With a blue-velvet display case, a Certificate of Authenticity and Silver Purity, and a booklet describing the knife's history, the miniature collectible retails for \$34.50 postpaid. For details on this and upcoming offerings, contact *The American Historical Foundation*, Dept. SOF, 1316 West Main Street, Richmond, VA 23220.



## AMMO HANDLER ...

*Lyman Products Corp.*, well-known for its reloading equipment, has developed a new kit called the Ammo-Handler to complement reloading presses. The kit includes a number-55 powder measure, a Lyman D-7 scale, a deburring tool, a case-lube kit, a powder funnel and, as a bonus, Lyman's popular 45th edition *Reloading Handbook*.

In other words, the Ammo-Handler kit contains all components necessary for powder handling in metallic reloading and, at \$111.95, offers a saving of more than \$10 over cost of items purchased individually. For more information write to *Lyman Products Corp.*, Dept. SOF, Rt. 147, Middlefield, CT 06455.

## REVIVED CONVERSION ...

*Armaments Systems and Procedures, Inc.* is making its 9mm conversion of the Smith & Wesson M39 double-action pistol available again for the first time since 1972. In its transformation to a Walther PP-size pistol, the M39 is completely remanufactured and includes some unique features: Black Teflon-S coating for corrosion resistance; clear Lexan grips, Guttersnipe advanced-sighting plane, finger-control magazine extensions for recoil control and a magnetic double magazine holder.



## HANDLING IT ...

*Future Industries* has designed a barrel extension for the Ingram MAC 10 and the MAC 11 (shown here). Manufactured with 1¼-inch tubing of 4130 steel, the extension features a vertical foregrip which swivels 360 degrees, improving controllability and therefore accuracy.

This lightweight barrel extension measures eight inches, is available in 9mm, .45 and .380 caliber, and retails for \$39.95 plus \$3 postage from *Future Industries*, Dept. SOF, 3401 San Marino, San Jose, CA 95127.

Described as a "completely defrilled, 100-percent reliable, close-quarter combat weapon," the pistol is designed as a concealment weapon for special operations and executive-security personnel. It is smooth — all sharp edges radiused — and its specially throated barrel chambers any 9mm combat ammunition.

Completed ASP pistols retail for \$700, and the conversion is performed on a customer-supplied M39 for \$450. Direct information requests to *Armament Systems and Procedures, Inc.*, Dept. SOF, Box 356, Appleton, WI 54912.



*Project Delta, Special Forces Detachment B-52, one of the most highly decorated units of its size in the Vietnam War, was organized in early 1965 under the code name, "Leapin' Lena." At first it used only indigenous troops, but within six months American advisers started accompanying the patrols.*

*The project achieved its highest degree of perfection in 1967-68 under Maj. (later Lt. Col.) Chuck Allen, the man Gen. William C. Westmoreland called "Big 'Un." Under Allen and subsequently, the core of the project consisted of the recon section, with 12 teams of 10 members each — usually four Americans and six Vietnamese Special Forces men — only six of whom were usually deployed at a time. The headquarters was SF Det B-52. Nominally the project was commanded by a Viet lieutenant colonel with Allen as his adviser.*

*Project Delta was the organization of which Gen. Robert Cushman, later Commandant of the Marine Corps, said: "These men come from the ether zone of military excellence."*

*At about the time of the Tet offensive, author Morris, a PIO officer, met some of the officers from Project Delta and was able to go along on an extraction operation with Allen and Capt. Bill Larabee, Allen's operations officer.*

*On their return from this mission, Allen asked Morris if he wanted to return the next day with the reaction force, the 91st Airborne-Ranger Battalion, in order to blow up some caches and get further identification on the Russian-made tanks found the week before. Morris said, "Sure."*

**O**UR ship flared out about 30 feet up and settled slowly to earth. When she was about five feet off the ground, Ken Nauman hitched up the seat of his pants and dropped out of sight. I barrelled out after him, jumping off the skids, landing bent over and running for the edge of the LZ where the perimeter was starting to form. I hit the ground behind a dirt bank covered with dry reeds and looked around.

The choppers lifted off, whipping rotors pulling them upward. Vietnamese Rangers ran to fill in a good 360-degree defensive perimeter. Rotors blasted dust into the air, down the backs of our necks and into our hair, teeth and eyes. The gunships went around again: rockets whooshed and cracked, machine guns chattered, mini-guns bu-u-urped out streams of fire.

Nauman sat, looking bored, about 30 feet away, next to the Vietnamese carrying his radio. He took the handset and said, "Crusade Zero-five, this is Zero-six. Over."

There was a pause; then he said, "This is Zero-six. You in position? Over." Another pause. "Roger, out."

Of medium height, Nauman generally looked bored. He had big, soft, baggy

# DEATH- DEALING DELTA

## Part 2: B-52 Team on a Hot LZ

by Jim Morris



eyes. He was 29 but looked much older. Three tours in 'Nam had aged him.

He got up and started to stroll off, head down, talking into the handset, radioman trotting behind.

We walked over a dugout dirt bank and came upon a Vietnamese lieutenant kneeling, talking into his own radio. He was getting positions from the Vietnamese commanders. Nauman explained he was Lt. Linh, commander of the first lift.

The lieutenant wore his helmet cocked back, chinstraps dangling on either side of his chubby cheeks. He looked like a younger version of Prince Norodom Sihanouk of Cambodia. Nauman went over and knelt beside him for a moment, checking to see if they were getting the same information over the radio. Then he nodded and walked away.

I stayed and shot some pictures of Linh.

A three-man, 60mm mortar crew hustled around under Linh's direction, trying to keep its tube out from under the trees. They fired handheld, the skinny mortarman moving his knee-high olive-drab pipe proudly and with great precision. When he was satisfied, they'd drop two or three rounds down the tube, then shift again.

After watching for a few minutes, I wandered off to find Nauman.

He stood on the edge of the LZ looking out across it. There was a huge B-52 bomb crater to our right front and another one to the left. About 30 meters away, sat a UHID (a Huey helicopter).

### Capt. Ken Nauman calls in airstrike from bomb crater.



I nodded toward it. "What's that doing there?"

He shrugged. "Shot down," he said. No bullet holes were visible, but it sat still and empty. It looked dead.

"Everybody get out all right?"

He nodded. "Uh huh."

"When's the next lift coming in?"

He pushed his hat back on his head and said, "It's overdue now. I hope to hell it gets here soon. We're just sitting here waiting for Charles to get his stuff together. We're not making any money," he said, jerking his head toward the trees. "Let's go get in the shade."

Nauman, the radioman and I walked off together, automatically keeping five yards between us.

We crashed under the trees. Everything was quiet. The mortar men were flaked out around their tube, eating rice and fish. I opened my pack and got out a long-range-patrol ration. Chili.

"Hey, Ken," I said, waving the bag, "you want half of this? I can't eat it all."

He lay under a tree, head on his pack, hat over his eyes, smoking a cigarette. "No thanks, Babe," he said, not moving. "Not hungry."

I finished the chili, lay down, lit a cigarette and mashed my own hat down over my nose. Bright sunlight turned all the leaves around us to pale translucent green.

Lt. Linh sat cross-legged under a tree, one arm propped up on his radio, eating sausage. He held out a slice to me, smiling.

"*Da Khong, cam on Chung 'Uy* (no, thanks, major)," I said.

He ate that slice and cut himself another. Breezes blew the tree limbs and shivered their translucent leaves. We sucked down cigarette smoke and the day grew hotter.

We waited. The sun burned through the trees. I took off my hat to wipe the sweat from my forehead, and the inside of my eyelids turned red.

"Hey!" Nauman said.

I pushed my hat back a little and looked at his inert form. "Huh, what?"

"How'd you like to have one of those cold Cokes® we were drinking before we left?"

I smiled maliciously. "How'd you like to have a big orange drink in a tall waxed-paper cup, full of ice you could crunch on for half an hour after you finished it?"

"Why you rotten son of a bitch," he muttered, without moving.

I glanced at my watch. "We've been here almost four hours now," I said. "The longer we wait, the more trouble we're going to be in when we move."

Nauman stirred uneasily. "What I'm afraid of is that we'll get moving late and get in a fire fight about 6:30, just when we don't want it."

I pushed my hat lower, dimly hearing sounds in the distance.

"Incoming!" Nauman said.

Without consciously moving I found

myself face first in the dirt, M16 in the firing position. Four B-40 rockets exploded out on the LZ and there was the sound of four more being fired.

When Nauman saw they didn't have the range on us, he sat back up and got on the radio, talking intently into the microphone. "Falcon, this is Crusade Zero-six, Zero-six. Over. Falcon . . . Roger, Falcon Two-two . . . Oh! Hi, John. Good to have you out. What've you got? Over."

A small Air Force 02B aircraft buzzed around, front and rear propellers outlined against the sky. It was Falcon, the Delta Forward Air Controller.

Nauman looked up and said, "Keep low. We're gonna have some F-105s here in a minute." He looked at Linh. "*Chung 'Uy*, you get adjustments from the companies over your radio and feed them to me. I'll keep adjusting the aircraft." Then back into the microphone, "Hey, John! You see the high ground about a hundred meters north of the LZ? Put your marking round in there."

## Calling In Air

Two flights of F-105s appeared over the horizon. They roared in low over the LZ and swung, clean, sweptback and beautiful, into the sky. The little FAC dropped over in a tight 180 and buzzed the hill Nauman had indicated.

Crack-whoosh-WHOMP! went the marking round, leaving a plume of white smoke hanging over the target.

"Very good!" Nauman said. "Bring your first round in right there."

It was very quiet after the marking round. The B-40s quit falling.

The fighters came around and the first one came in on the target.

"Hit it!" Nauman said and fell to earth.

I sat up and watched. They hit. The entire landscape jumped, and I picked a jagged piece of hot steel off my lap. After that I decided to do what the man said.

"That was pretty good, John," Nauman said. "Put 'em in on that ridge line right there."

The jets peeled off one after the other and came in. The arc of the falling high-drag bombs was slow. We hit the ground a fraction of a second before they struck. Nauman put in napalm too. We didn't need to crouch when the huge orange and black blossoms ballooned across the horizon.

After the aircraft dumped their loads and headed for home it was quiet again. The FAC kept buzzing around, and Charles left us alone.

A few minutes later, we heard the whop-whop-whop of returning helicopters. I cradled the rifle under my arm and got out my camera, walking down to the edge of the LZ.



Two gunships circled it. A cloud of slicks whirled in to dump their troops, UHIDs from the 281st, and Marine CH-46s.

Two and three at a time the slicks landed. Tailgates on the big CH-46s dropped, troops poured off the ramp and the choppers clawed back into the sky. One limped in, smoking, and the crew barrelled out with the troops.

A Huey lifted off, shuddered, started to go down, shuddered again, straightened up and staggered over the horizon. Another went through the same drill but crashed in the trees about 200 meters past the LZ, right where Charles was. It occurred to me that all the firing wasn't coming from our perimeter.

When all the ships were gone, it was quiet again. Three ships were down on the LZ and I had seen one more go down. I didn't know if there were others. One thing was certain: everybody wasn't here yet. I didn't know if Nauman was going to try to bring in another lift or not. He wasn't there to ask.

Some guys were out on the LZ, poking around the first downed Huey. There was no firing, so I went over to take pictures. Two guys from the project sat in the door on the shady side, smoking. A couple of others looked in the pilot's compartment. The machine guns had been taken out.

I sat in the doorway, got a cigarette and gave the interior of the chopper a quick once-over to see if there was any ice water inside. There wasn't.

"You guys just get here?" I asked, taking a drag on the cigarette.

There was a burst of automatic-weapons fire and the dirt kicked up around us. Other weapons joined in and the LZ became a field of little dirt geysers. The guy I was talking to started running.

## Crater Cover

We ran full tilt toward the bomb crater. I charged over the side and dropped halfway down the slope, sliding the rest of the way to the bottom. There were eight men already there, and plenty of room for more.

One of them, a big, dark-headed, woolly bear of a man, worked for me as a photographer, Spec. 6 Bob Christiansen.

"Hello, Chris," I said.

He smiled. "Morning, sir."

I dusted myself off and flicked dirt off my weapon. B-40s were coming in on the LZ and a hell of a racket had been going on since that first burst. "How come you didn't make it on that first lift?" I asked Christiansen.

"Chopper got hit and we had a bunch of wounded. Had to go back," he replied. He shook his head. "I thought it over for quite a while before I came back out."

I laughed. "You shoulda thought longer."

A Marine sergeant from one of the helicopters looked nervously over the crater's rim. He wore a .45 in a cowboy rig

and a flak vest. "Look," he said, "we better get out of here. This old chopper's going to blow any minute now."

I crawled up beside him. The CH-46 was still smoking. The idea of its blowing up didn't bother me any more than the B-40s and automatic-weapons fire upstairs. Still, we had to leave sometime.

"Okay! Do it!" I said.

Everybody took a couple of deep breaths, looked at each other and went over the edge.

I did not feel the weight of the 300 rounds of ammunition on my belt, or the knife, or the camera, or the grenades. I do not remember running. I have one memory of red dirt moving beneath my feet and another of the next crater as I blasted over the side and slid down. This one had about five guys in it.

## "We Better Get Out of Here"

Somebody yelled, "Medic!" from the other side of the crater. I poked my head up just as Meder, the short, dark-haired medic with the Bronx accent, started over the rim. He didn't have to go out. A skinny figure in a tiger suit and bush hat rolled into the crater, rounds kicking up dirt all around him.

"Got hit in the chest!" he said as he crashed into the crater, M16 in hand. It was 1st Lt. Tom Humphus, one of the company advisers.

Meder tore his shirt open, looked closely at it and said, "In and out pec. Didn't go in the chest cavity. He's gonna be all right."

"What the hell were you doing up there?" I asked.

He shrugged. "Just lookin' around."

"See anything interesting?"

"I saw we better get out of here," he replied.

He was right. We were better off than in the other crater, but still exposed. If one guy got lucky with a B-40 we'd all had it.

A few seconds later we were running again, this time straight for the treeline and Lt. Linh's old position. As soon as there were trees between me and the NVA gunners, I slowed to a walk, chest heaving, barely able to lift my feet. After 10 months in an office, the weight of the ammo and running had really gotten to me. I staggered into Linh's grove of trees and collapsed, panting.

Linh was talking on his radio and firing his M79. He moved quickly and nervously from one to the other, beads of sweat standing out on his upper lip. He was probably thinking the same thing I was. We had to collect our wounded, call in the perimeter and make an orderly withdrawal — almost impossible without air cover, and for that we needed Nauman. He might be stuck out there in one of the craters. He might be anywhere.

I was still mulling this over when a big

red-haired trooper I didn't know came up through the woods. He looked about 23 or 24. Following him was a slender, clean-cut, black-haired kid.

I followed the two young soldiers back through the trees and moved parallel to the LZ. The red-haired guy in front called to some Americans and Vietnamese Rangers to come help. They stared at him stupidly and didn't move.

We stood on a five-foot dirt bank and looked across 30 meters of flat, open country to that first bomb crater. Once out of the trees, there was scarcely a blade of grass between us and it. It had filled up with men again, but I didn't see anybody who looked too hurt to move.

"That it?" I asked. The CH-46 was still smoking.

"That's it," said the redhead, and he started down through the trees with the other kid right behind him.

I followed, watching them and the crater instead of where I was going. Just as they broke out of the woods and started running, I tripped and fell flat on my face in the bush.

I looked up. They were running, halfway to the crater, dodging rounds. I didn't see them get hit, but if they weren't it was a miracle. They weren't going to make it back without covering fire.

About 15 men were in the crater. Some wore green Marine flying suits. A tall guy in a tiger suit, standing at the far edge of the crater, lit a cigarette.



"Hey!" I called. "Where's that fire coming from?"

He pointed to my right front and said, "In the woods over there about 200 meters. There's a machine gun."

## Covering Fire

"Okay!" I called back. "You guys let me know when you're ready to come out. I'll put down covering fire. Come right through here."

"Right!" he called back.

I stood up, exposed, a little way into the woods. It was the only way I could fire over their heads when they came through. My right hand trembled as I picked four magazines out of the ammo pouch and laid them on the ground for quick access.

I hoped "tiger suit" had given me the right location on that machine gun. If I gave my position away by firing at the wrong place, the MG could cut me in half.

The guys we had passed earlier were out of sight in the woods. I didn't want to leave for fear the men in the crater would make their break, so I turned and shouted, "Hey! We've gotta put down covering fire for these guys. When I open fire, you fire on that wood line over there."

No reply. I yelled again and turned back to the crater.

The big guy was standing there, still smoking his cigarette.

"Hey!" I called. "You guys about ready?"

"Just a minute," he called back. He took a deep drag, flipped it away, exhaled slowly and called back, "Okay."

I brought my M16 down on where the machine gun was supposed to be and bellowed, "Fire!" squeezing the trigger. The weapon emptied in four fast bursts. I punched the magazine release and almost beat the magazine to the ground, scooping up another. The herd of camouflaged troopers was halfway to the bank. I opened up again.

Those in the lead wavered for a split second when I fired. Without taking my finger off the trigger I called, "*C'mon, goddamnit! I'm firing over your heads!*"

The first ones broke into the shade and scrambled up the bank, almost knocking me over. I stepped back, reaching for another magazine. As the men came through, they headed back into the bank for cover, clearing the way for those behind. Finally only two were left exposed.

"Let's go!" I ordered.

"Sir, I'm too weak to make it. You've got to pull me up." It was the clean-cut kid with the redhead right behind him.

"I'll push him," the redhead told me.

Oh Christ! I thought, if I quit firing . . . the machine gun . . . Awwwww!

## Mortarmen from 91st Airborne-Battalion break for lunch.

I reached down, grabbed his arm and pulled. He didn't budge. The red-haired guy was pushing. It was almost a straight pull up and the kid wasn't moving. "*Need some help over here!*" I called.

My rifle was at my feet and the kid wasn't moving. Four bullets hit all around us in regular sequence. Machine-gun rounds. I heard nothing. I wanted out but I couldn't leave them like that. Then I heard the second burst, saw more rounds hit and something went splat hard against my right forearm.

## Spurting Blood

I looked down at a huge blue-black hole in my arm, spurting blood like the needle spray in a shower.

"Holy shit!" I cried, realizing two things at once: A. I couldn't pull them up now and B. I was dying.

I grabbed the wound and ran back toward the medics. A branch knocked my hat off. I yelled, "Medic! Medic!" and barrelled into Lt. Linh's sanctuary, still yelling.

I saw an older-looking GI and a couple of others, younger.

"Need a tourniquet, fast!" I said.

"Uh huh," said the older guy, nodding. He tightened a rifle sling around my upper arm.

"It needs to go higher," I said.

He shook his sandy-haired head calmly. "This is where it goes. I know about these things." That was my introduction to Doc Taylor, one of the best medics in Special Forces. He saved my life. He saved a lot of lives that day.

Meder appeared and bandaged the wound, tearing the plastic wrapper off an ace bandage with his teeth, while holding gauze pads over the wound.

"We're gonna put this tourniquet on real loose," Doc said, "and try to hold the bleeding with pressure. It looks like it'll be awhile before we can get you out of here."

"L-listen," I said, shaking, "I was trying to haul two guys over that bank when I got hit. They're both wounded."

Doc looked me straight in the face. "They still there?"

"Yeah," I said, "yeah, they're still there."

He and Meder disappeared. I sat there feeling rotten for having left them. I couldn't have helped them if I'd stayed, plus I'd have died. But I still felt rotten.

There was no other course of action I could have taken. A man will bleed to death in six to eight minutes from a severed artery left unattended, but that didn't make me feel any better. I knew I couldn't have pulled them up after I'd been hit, but that didn't help either. You always think that when the clutch comes you'll emerge from a phone booth in a pair of blue tights with a red towel around your neck. This was the incident that finally got it through my head — beret or no beret, we were only human. There are



no supermen and damned few heroes — almost no live ones.

More wounded started coming in, some limping, some carried. Most were already bandaged, but a lot of blood splattered around.

Sgt. Thompson — from the Delta Intelligence section — walked in, hunkered over and sad-looking. He had no visible wounds.

"Glad to see you're okay," I said.

He sat down, saying, "Haw! I got two slugs in the chest."

## Sucking Chest Wound

The medics went to work around us, cans of albumin blood-expander coming out, hypos going in. Two guys brought in a Marine helicopter pilot and laid him beside me. The remnants of his flight suit were blood-splattered, and his face was waxy, yellow and blank. Doc Taylor put in the albumin.

Thompson dug a cigarette out of his pocket. Now I could see the blood on his shirt. "I hold the world's record for the 40-yard low-crawl with a sucking chest wound," he said, starting to chuckle. The chuckle ended in a wheeze and grimace of pain.

I shook my head in disbelief. "Don't tell me," I said, "it only hurts when you laugh."

"It hurts all the time," he replied. "It hurts bad when I laugh." He grinned again, careful not to let his body shake.

Meder returned, saying, "That red-headed guy you were trying to pull out was John Link. The other guy was named Merriman."

"Did you get them up?" I asked anxiously.

He nodded. "Yeah. Link's got three slugs in the back. He's unconscious. Merriman's got three in the legs."

"Oh Jesus! Are they gonna make it?"

Meder unbuttoned Thompson's shirt to see if his bandage was still airtight. "Merriman will" he said. "We're not so sure about Link."

I leaned back on my good arm and shook my head, then sat up again to fish a cigarette out of my pocket with my left hand.

"Lemme give you a light."

I shook my head. "Naw. I can do it myself."

Ken Nauman strolled back into the little grove, more cheerful than usual. His radio operator chugged along behind him, scared and winded.

"You wounded too, Jim?" he asked, sitting down to light a cigarette.

"Uh huh." I replied, leaning up. "Where you been?"

He looked over his shoulder. "Checking the perimeter," he answered.

I could imagine what a hellish project that must have been in this mess.

"You mind if I make a suggestion?"

He grinned. "Shoot!"

"The next time you have to use multiple

lifts like this, use more than one LZ and link up on the ground."

He laughed, reached for the radio and said, "Falcon Two-two. Crusade Zero-six. Over."

I couldn't sleep that night. It wasn't the B-40s falling, because none of them were coming into our little pocket. And the other wounded were quiet. It was the pain in my right arm — only a dull ache — but when I tried to relax enough to sleep, the pain was all there was. "Awwwww dammit!" I muttered, thrashing around in frustration.

After a while, Doc Taylor materialized at my side. "Sir, I better give you something for that pain. You got any morphine?"

I took the small box of morphine syrettes out of my ammo pouch and gave him one. He jammed the needle straight into my leg and squeezed the tube dry. I barely felt it.

Three hours later pain woke me up. It was dark, but in the moonlight I could see Doc working on the helicopter pilot. I didn't want to bother him so I just watched. He worked for a long time, feverishly. Then he stopped and sat down in the darkness, his arms draped over his knees. He lowered his head and shook it slowly.

I didn't want to bother him then either, but the pain was getting worse. "Hey, Doc!"

He didn't want to give me morphine yet, so I got a shot of Demerol. A few hours later he gave me enough morphine to last through the night.

In the morning, my right hand was swollen up like that of a three-day-old corpse. I lay looking at it for a while, then started to get up. The bandage came loose and bright red blood mixed with the dry maroon already on the bandage. "Hey, Meder!" I shouted. "This mother broke loose!"

He cinched up the tourniquet and started to rebandage the wound.

"Ush!" I said.

Meder looked like it hurt him worse than me, "Sorry, sir."

"S'okay," I replied. "You do what you gotta and change that bandage, and I'll do what I gotta and whimper." I started whistling, toneless and dirge-like, while he worked — once I'd made up my mind it didn't hurt so bad.

"Hey, Ace," I said, "Am I gonna get to keep this arm? I've sort of grown attached to it."

He looked at me levelly and replied, "If we get you out today, probably so; if not, probably not." He finished rebandaging the wound. "Want a shot?"

"Not if we're going to move," I replied. "As long as I'm doing something my mind is off the pain."

We needed an airstrike to cover our withdrawal, but it was too overcast. B-40s kept coming in and Charles ran probe after probe on the companies on the perimeter. We took more casualties.

Nauman was on the radio the whole

time, checking with the FAC on fighters, checking with the companies. About 10 o'clock he looked up from the radio with undisguised glee.

"Hey, Jim," he said, "we got a prisoner." The project for three weeks had been to look for a prisoner who could supply information about this valley.

"Listen," Nauman said into the microphone, "if anything happens to that prisoner, you're going to have to answer to me."

A few minutes later we got another call. Preliminary interrogation of the prisoner indicated that our two companies had been engaged by two companies of NVA troops and that another battalion was on its way. Oh joy!

It was after 11:00 by the time Nauman could bring an airstrike of 500-pounders and napalm in on the NVA positions. One napalm hit the spot where the machine



gun had been the day before and I hoped to God the gunner fried in it.

Men started moving around, picking things up. We were getting information to go. Nauman kept the strikes coming in. I got up, but was so lightheaded from loss of blood I had to sit back down again. Then I grappled my way up slowly and floated off toward the head of the column. I figured if I couldn't stand the pace, I'd drop back slowly, still getting there with everybody else.

The NVA prisoner came by with two Rangers escorting him. He was just a kid, somewhere between 15 and 17, wearing OD shorts, khaki NVA tennis shoes and a

**Master Sgt. Thompson of Delta intelligence section, half-hour after setting world's record for 40-yard low-crawl with a sucking chest wound.**



fatigue shirt about three sizes too big that flapped around his skinny body. He grinned and almost skipped. He was out of the fighting and realized we weren't going to hurt him.

The ragged column walked over a flat, washed-out muddy area, then down into a creek for half a mile, jungle-covered mountains towering above. We moved single file. I felt stronger than I'd expected and, since almost everybody else was either walking wounded or carrying dead or litter patients, I was no exception. Helicopter crewmen had picked up my pack and rifle.

It was heavy going in the thick brush. Nauman was in the rear, bringing in airstrikes to cover our exit. I felt out of it.

About a half-hour later, we came to a hill overlooking a small LZ we had used before. I collapsed against a tree next to Lt. Linh and pointed to the small clearing below. "Is that the one?" I asked.

"Yes," he said.

I bummed some water from him. "You're a pretty good officer, *Chung Uy*. You did a good job on this patrol." It was no snow job. I really meant it.

He looked embarrassed and said, "No, I am number 10 officer."

I smiled. "No. You're pretty good."

We waited a few more minutes, then he turned to me, "You go now."

I got up and, stumbling over rocks, grasping at trees, followed a couple of his troopers down the hill to the LZ. It was a steep hill and I had to stop twice before we reached bottom. Once down, I found Humphus and some others waiting by a bomb crater, ready to jump if necessary.

Doc Taylor came up with some Rangers carrying wounded in ponchos slung from poles. I asked him how Link and Merri-man were.

He looked tired. "John Link died this morning, just as we pulled out. Merri-man's going to make it okay."

I felt depressed — not guilty, just bad. No, that's bullshit. I felt guilty.

Nauman came in with his radio and the rear guard. "FAC says this isn't the LZ," he said. "Says it's about 200 meters farther on."

"C'mon. It's not far." He went back to call another airstrike on our backtrail.

We pushed ourselves up to crash into the brush again. In the intervals between airstrikes, B-40s fell behind us. None came near our part of the column, but Charles was still trying.

Three more times we stopped at small clearings, and each time the FAC told us it was farther on. The troops grew more and more tired. I staggered. My head lolled back and I stared at the translucent leaves above. Trees and rocks stood out in startling clarity, but I felt as though I might fade and disappear.

I walked carefully so the bandage wouldn't break loose again. There was a little seepage around the edges, but not much.

Two Rangers staggered past, carrying a corpse wrapped in my poncho liner, large

patches of dry blood superimposed on the green camouflage pattern. I remembered giving it away the night before. The corpse's right hand was two-thirds blown away, extended upward in rigor mortis. The bloody stump waved in my face as it passed. I regarded it with interest.

At times I could see no one in front and no one behind and had to watch the ground for signs, hoping I wouldn't take a wrong turn. This was neither the time nor the place to get lost. We walked five kilometers that way.

Light was fading when finally we came to a large, open field, big enough to take a dozen choppers. Men from the project were already getting the LZ set up when we came in. Most of them didn't think we'd get out that night, and said so. If they were right, a lot of wounded would die — I'd lose my arm.

Rangers started setting up a perimeter. I stood staring, mouth open, then finally managed to sit down.

## Fighters And Gunships

The FAC appeared, and some fighter cover, then gunships. Chuck Allen's Command and Control helicopter came. I could visualize Allen in the door, 250 pounds of muscle, graying crewcut and iron jaw, sitting behind his newly installed M60 machine gun. Larrabee would be seated cross-legged in the door with his scope-sighted CAR-15, both men hooked in by radio to all the friendlies in the air and on the ground. When I saw Allen I knew we were going to make it.

Two troopers carried John Link's body up and put it down about eight feet from me. A grim trooper knelt beside him and patted the pole Link's body was slung from. "Well, John, old buddy," he said, "Goddamn!"

He got up and walked off, head bowed.

Merriman lay on the ground, his carrying pole off to the side, a few feet from Link's body. I pushed myself to my feet and walked over. He was smoking.

"Hey, listen," I said. "I feel rotten about leaving you guys like that."

He shook his head. "Forget it, sir. You had to. I saw what happened."

That made me feel a little better, but not much. I squatted. "How long before you got out?"

He looked pained. "Fifteen minutes," he said.

"My God! That long?" It had seemed like three to me.

He nodded. "Yessir, but we took the rounds while you were there. We lay quiet and he didn't fire anymore."

I smiled at him. "You gonna be all right?"

He nodded, relaxed, glad to be alive. "Yeah. It'll be a while, but I'll be all right."

"Good."

*Continued on page 71*

WHEN the man at the counter first handed me the Beretta BM-62, I knew that I had a serious piece of gear in my hands. As an assault-rifle fan, I knew that over the past few years the U.S. market for "nasty" guns has increased steadily, and as a student of small arms and weaponcraft, I was naturally interested in Beretta's new offering. This excellent rifle has an interesting history.

When the United States wanted an ideal NATO rifle in the 1950s, American developers began with the M1 Garand. After spending a few million 1950s' dollars, they created the M14 rifle (T-44). It and the FN FAL (T-48) were the final choices, but politics dictated that the Springfield Armory-designed M14 win. The M14 is a fine weapon, and I mourn its passing from the U.S. military arsenal.

Because their forces were armed with M1 Garand rifles in the 1950s, the Italians had tons of these fine weapons, and since they could *not* afford to scrap them and start over, they simply modified the Garand — a solution that the United States should have considered — into a more modern assault rifle. Modifications include a 20-round box magazine, conversion to 7.62 NATO caliber, a shortened gas system and barrel and addition of a flash suppressor. The converted rifle was designated the Beretta Model 1959 — or BM-59.

### Italy's NATO Rifle

Beretta's 7.62 NATO rifle is not really new to the United States. The first Beretta BM-59 rifles sold here were made under license by Golden State Arms of California in the mid-1960s. They were assembled on demilled Garand receivers that had been rewelded together. Later, a limited number of Beretta-made BM-59 rifles were imported and sold in this country.

The newer BM-62 is a final version of the BM-59 — with minor modifications. The difference between the BM-59 and BM-62 comes from the fact that the latter is not capable of full-auto fire. A simple flash suppressor has been utilized to form a minor baffle chamber. It slightly reduces the muzzle blast of the 17.7-inch barrel. A rubber recoil pad has been fitted to the BM-62 for maximum comfort. Unlike many other current 7.62 NATO assault rifles on sale today, the BM-62 stock stays secure on the shoulder instead of slipping around as steel and plastic buttplate versions tend to do.

The Beretta BM-62 is a real rifleman's rifle and has some features that make it the best of the lot. It is extremely accurate. In the hands of a good rifleman, performance is judged by ability to fire a weapon with skill and ease, and here is where the BM-62 really shines.

The weapon's success comes from retaining the strong points of the Garand. A

rifleman's skill depends upon the handling characteristics of the individual weapon, its trigger pull and sights. The BM-62 handles even better than the U.S.-made M1A. Its length makes it handle like a carbine. The safety — like those of the Garand, M14 and current M1A — is in front of the trigger guard, so it works perfectly for either a right- or left-handed shooter, as does the magazine catch.

An excellent trigger and superb sights

make the BM-62 stand out. The trigger of the test gun was nice — 5½ pounds and a crisp break. The sights are fast, easy to zero and adjust, well-protected and among the most rugged around. The test rifle required 13 clicks of elevation to get a 200-yard zero.

The really good news comes from the universally fine quality of Beretta firearms. I noted that a few parts were U.S.-made Garand components, but most

# A RIFLEMAN RIFLE

## Beretta's BM-62: Grandson of the Garand



Evolution of Garand family. From top: original M1 Garand rifle; M1A, commercial version of M14 NATO rifle; early BM-59, as sold by Golden State Arms of Calif.; BM-62 — final development and Hackathorn's choice.

bore the BM-59 mark. Critical parts — such as extractors, ejectors and firing pins — are interchangeable with those of the U.S. Garand.

The test Beretta BM-62 was a joy to shoot. With the aid of friend and fellow shooter, Staff Sgt. John Miller, we gave the weapon a real workout. First, Miller, a top MTU (Marksmanship Training Unit) armorer, checked out the rifle completely. Everything passed the armorer's check

without need for gunsmith fitting or correction. Headspace was perfect and checked out 1.630 inches SAMMI minimum. The 17.7-inch barrel is four-groove, right-hand 1-in-12 twist with an extremely smooth bore surface. Overall fit and finish were excellent. (Miller — who rarely hands out compliments — was so impressed that he purchased the test rifle after the test and evaluation for his own use.)

Next came the range session — wet and cold, with rain changing to snow and a strong cross wind. Despite our physical discomfort, we found that overall accuracy of the test BM-62 was excellent for a rack-grade weapon that had not been tuned for competition. We put a few hundred rounds of .308-caliber through the test gun. Top accuracy came from M118 Match ball ammo, but the rifle also performed well even with normal ball ammo.

Groups were not good when we fired for a 100-yard zero — a check showed that the gas-cylinder plug was loose. We needed a 6mm allen wrench to tighten it. Since this wrench is not a common item — and since none came with the rifle — we had to search to turn one up. Once the gas plug was secure, everything went well.

After 123 rounds, the magazine catch pin began to drift out. When it was pushed back into position, it remained there for the rest of the test but, nonetheless, it was staked in place later.

Beretta's BM-62 is intended to be a serious fighting rifle. It fits this role with ease and achieves a level of quality that too often seems to be disappearing in today's arms industry.

The current supply of Beretta BM-62 rifles is the last of the lot. Only a few thousand will be imported. The Italian army is changing over to the Beretta M-70 assault rifle in 5.56mm. BM-59 military-rifle stocks are being phased out. The Beretta factory is assembling the spare parts from their inventory for commercial sale in the United States.

## Magazine Factor

The magazine furnished with the Beretta BM-62 is one of the finest-quality products that I have examined — but the magazine situation is a drawback of ownership. Although Beretta USA Corp. (Dept. SOF, 17601 Indian Head Hwy., Accokeek, MD 20607) hopes to have spares available in the future, none are now available. However, if you want a serious battle rifle, you need at least five spare magazines — although you might get by with three. (I prefer at least five 20-round magazines for my social rifle.)

Retail price of the BM59/62 magazine would be \$47 each — if Beretta had them. (This price is enough to make some folks flinch.) Suggested retail price for the Beretta BM-62 rifle is \$985. Add the money for spare magazines and you have a very expensive weapon — but, like most things in today's world, you get what you pay for. I hope that when the Italian army BM-59 rifles hit the surplus market, some spare BM-59 magazines will become available at a reasonable cost.

If I had at least five spare 20-round magazines, the BM-62 would be my pick-up-and-go rifle. The FN, H&K and M1A would just have to gather dust.



# AN'S

Text & Photos by Ken Hackathorn



John Miller fires BM-62 for 200-yard 20-shot group. Note weapon's short overall length and dimensions.



Beretta BM-62 7.62 NATO rifle field-stripped. Note simplicity of components. Ten and 20-round magazines at bottom.

### BERETTA BM-62 RIFLE

Center fire, semiautomatic, gas operated, 7.62 NATO (.308) caliber. 10- or 20-round box magazine. Oil-finish walnut stock. Metal surfaces phosphate (Parkerized) finished. Manual safety, equally operable for right- or left-hand use.

**Overall length** 38½"  
**Weight** 8 lbs., 11 oz.  
**Sights** protected post front, aperture rear, adjustable for windage and elevation.  
**Trigger** two-stage military, 5½ lb., let-off.

# ON NORTHERN IRELAND'S FRONT LINE

## UDR Makes British Military History

by Doug Campbell



Mobile patrol scans farm building as it crisscrosses roads over wide rural area in modified Landrover. Men all carry FN/FAL L1A1 rifles. Note that one weapon includes telescopic sight. Photo: British Army Info. Services.

**T**HE Ulster Defense Regiment is 11 years old this year. Not since the Napoleonic Wars has a British army regiment remained continuously on active duty for such a long time. This would be tough enough for any line regiment, but two-thirds of the UDR's soldiers are part-timers who don uniforms for duty after finishing their normal jobs.

The Ulster Defense Regiment is the youngest and largest infantry regiment in the British army. Today there are about 2,500 permanent cadre soldiers and 5,000 part-timers serving with the regiment. Of these, some 750 are women, called "Greenfinches" from their original radio code-name.

The regiment's executive head is a brigadier. He runs the equivalent of a brigade headquarters from Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn, on the outskirts of Belfast. He has some 120 officers, senior NCOs and soldiers posted in from the regular army to fill staff-training and administrative slots.

The sectarian struggle in Northern Ireland could never be described as a conventional battle in which clear-cut victories can be won in the field, or territorial

conquests can be made. For the UDR — and of course the regular British army — it has been a sheer slogging-round of largely routine security tasks. But because of the way the regiment has carried out these tasks, it has gained a grudging reputation from all sides in this confusing struggle and, in the process, built up a considerable record of success.

### UDR Tasks Include Search Teams, Mobile Patrols, Checkpoints, Guard Duty

Its increasingly skilled search teams and patrols have relieved the terrorists of a small arsenal of weapons, ammunition and explosives, and its round-the-clock mobile and foot patrols, vehicle checks and key-point guard duties have helped to keep a tight rein on terrorist movements. In the process, the regiment has gained some 150 awards for gallantry and meritorious service.

But on that first day of operations in 1970, the UDR presented a makeshift, impermanent image. Supplementing the many young recruits for the first time were some 2,000 men of the disbanded Ulster Special Constabulary, the notorious B Specials, which although bringing an invaluable fund of local knowledge and experience, also brought the taint of sectarianism with them — the reason the Bs had been disbanded in the first place.

Many of the B Specials were mature men, whose outdated equipment, clothing and weaponry earned them the nickname, "Dad's Army."

In those early years, recruits were issued olive-green field dress, the outdated .303 Lee-Enfield rifle and Bren gun, and World War II pattern webbing. One unit, which requested warm clothing for the winter months, received a supply of white duffle coats — excellent Arctic rig but guaranteed to make a perfect target on the streets of Belfast.

The suppliers followed this novelty with a consignment of "bad weather" coats designed for dispatch riders — but these got so heavy when rain-soaked, that wearing them became an endurance test for



Award-winning Irish pup, Rats (third from left), accompanies friends on patrol. Photo: Express Newspapers.

**T**HE longest-serving veteran in the dangerous border country of Crossmaglen in Northern Ireland has retired after a checkered career, which included being blown up several times, shot at, patrol-bombed and awarded a special gold medal for valor.

The hero, a mongrel dog called Rats — British army number D7/7/777 — has retired to a peaceful farm in mainland Kent, a far cry from Crossmaglen's "bandit country."

While British battalions serve only four-month stretches in Northern Ireland, Rats has been there since he wandered into their fortified camp more than two years ago. He accom-

## REAL DOG OF WAR

panied patrols everywhere and rapidly became a familiar sight, jumping out of Royal Air Force Wessex helicopters on rural patrol.

Rats, a cross between a corgi and a terrier, was first wounded in July 1979 when a car-bomb exploded, killing a paratrooper. He limped back to base 10 minutes later with a severe leg wound. In February 1980, a Molotov cocktail might have ended his life, but instead only scarred his shoulder and

singed away most of the hair on one side of his body.

His standing is such that Rats has his own special handler and, although entitled to army rations, much prefers steak pies from the British PX, Naafi.

His last handler, Pvt. Arwel Lewis, 1st Battalion, Welsh Guards, said: "He was great to have around. He loved going in the helicopters and was always first in and first out. We shall miss him."

Now, instead of searching out terrorists, Rats has settled down to the more mundane farm life. It may not be as exciting but, for a brave little dog, it's a lot safer. —D.C.

some of the smaller recruits.

Some long-servers recall that soldiers detailed to guard key points and installations were issued hurricane lamps, a box of band-aids for first aid and a lance-corporal's stripe (with safety pin) to be fastened to the sleeve of whichever soldier was appointed NCO for the night. What little radio equipment was first available baffled the rookies, so patrols had to keep within range of public call boxes and be given a supply of coins — so they could report incidents and maintain contact by telephone.

The task of building up the first seven UDR battalions — one for each county and the seventh for Belfast — was launched from a collection of temporary bases, including Nissen huts, trailers, police stations and whatever other disused buildings could be taken over.

For a time, in Dungannon, two determined soldiers operated from a trailer set up in the town square. In their charge were 10 rifles and 200 rounds of ammunition — to be shared among two companies. And at one fledgling battalion HQ, a staff officer, operating from what had once been a ladies' lavatory, eagerly opened the first crate of equipment delivered to the unit — to find it packed with hundreds of manuals for loading Belfast air freighters.

Many UDR bases were so insecure that weapons had to be stored at the nearest army barracks. For the soldiers operating from these points, each night's duty meant a long journey to collect weapons and gear, with the travel repeated at the end of operations.

In 1971-72, four more battalions were raised, increasing commitment to the

security operation. At the start, it was envisioned that UDR strength would be 6,000. The number peaked in 1972, and has since been honed into a leaner, fitter force of 7,500, with most of the early volunteers having been replaced with younger men and women. Their equipment, too, has been updated to match that of their colleagues in the regular army, but it took a long time to shake off their amateur label.

The men and women who wear the crown-and-harp UDR badge need a special kind of courage. The UDR soldiers live in their own homes and, despite all precautions, are vulnerable to attack at all times.

If a soldier wishes to have a personal-protection weapon at home, he must first prove that his own or his family's life has been threatened, and then he will pro-





bably be allowed to draw a 6.35 Beretta — not much more effective than a starting pistol.

More than 100 UDR soldiers have been killed by terrorists, most of them part-timers murdered while off-duty. It is a fact of life that they cannot conceal their identity from anyone, since the very nature of their duties brings them into the public eye, so constant security precautions have to be taken.

Bound by law to be nonsectarian, and striving by a strict vetting system to ensure that only persons of moderation and good will from all sections of the community are enlisted, the regiment has been hampered by the systematic campaign of coercion and intimidation launched by the Provisional IRA to drive Catholics from the UDR and to deter others from joining. As a result, the Catholics make up only two percent of the regiment's strength (down from 18 percent in the early days), but those left are counted as some of the bravest men and women in Northern Ireland.

Intimidation frequently occurs, with about 100 reported cases a year. The dangers which UDR soldiers face, in addition to operational hazards, include threatening letters, anonymous phone calls, bricks and missiles thrown through windows, warnings painted on house walls, bullets taped to doors, public

abuse, damage to cars, shadowing from work to home, shots fired through windows, fire-bomb attacks and "targeting" threats.

And as if this were not enough, there is constant propaganda, by the IRA and other detractors, warning that the UDR has been infiltrated by paramilitary extremists.

The regiment's terse reply is that 21,000 men and women have served in the UDR since its formation, and the number involved in serious crime amount to only a quarter of one percent of that total. The percentage involved in sectarian offenses is even smaller.

The successful development of UDR search teams using trained dogs and handlers has contributed largely to the regiment's ability to unearth terrorist arms caches. Weapons, ammunition, explosives and other bomb components, hidden in cars, have been winkled out at UDR checkpoints, and more terrorist equipment has been found in abandoned vehicles, hedgerows, under bridges, in derelict farmhouses and outbuildings, in railway embankment hides and even in open fields and on roadside shoulders.

In follow-up operations, large caches have been found in houses used by terrorist gangs. Because of their local knowledge, off-duty soldiers have made some spectacular discoveries — like the

two off-duty men, out rabbit shooting, who discovered terrorists setting a culvert mine, or the soldier shepherding children away from a dangerous building because he saw a rifle in the rubble. This last find led to the discovery of a large arsenal.

In its 11 years of nonstop operations, the total UDR haul has included nearly 400 machine guns, more than 3,000 rifles and 3,300 pistols, nearly 1,000 shotguns, a score of rocket launchers, 60 rockets, 450 mortars and more than 500 mortar rounds. In addition, well over a million rounds of ammo, 3,100 improvised booby traps and some 280,000 pounds of explosives, along with large quantities of other bomb-making equipment, have been confiscated.

Now, on the threshold of a new decade, and looking ahead to the earning of more laurels, the Ulster Defense Regiment has received the inspiring accolade of the Freedom of the City of Belfast — further evidence, if any were needed, of the esteem in which the regiment is held by the general public and of that public's recognition of the UDR as an impartial force committed to serving the whole community of Northern Ireland.



## SOLDIERS AWAY FROM HOME

ONE group of soldiers in the Ulster Defense Regiment stands out like a sore thumb and has to exercise greater vigilance than anyone else in Northern Ireland. This is the growing band of men from other parts of the British Isles who have joined the regiment and are instantly marked by their "foreign" accents.

In most cases, these are men who have married Irish women while serving in the Province with the regular army. Life away from home often does not suit the home-loving Irish woman, and to avoid separation, many young soldiers have transferred to the UDR.

Communities in both urban and rural areas of Northern Ireland are clannish — strangers are soon spotted. So a newcomer with a Welsh or Scots, Liverpool or Newcastle accent draws attention. Sometimes, these men join the UDR for protection. But most join because it is contact with their previous way of life. Most never wanted to leave the army; they did it "to keep the wife happy." Otherwise, they say, they would never have stayed in Northern Ireland, when they could have chosen from all of Britain.

Once in the Province, they live in the community, their children go to local

schools and their wives use local shops. Many regiment troopers have a gun at home. Under British law, it is easier to get a license for a shotgun than any other weapon, so this has become the favorite off-duty protective weapon. It may not be accurate, but it does have a loud bang, which is probably as important.

Cpl. Hank Cummings, late of the Parachute Regiment, is a big, moustachioed ex-para, and he doesn't care who knows it. He lives in Belfast with his wife and two boys and is a regular member of the UDR. He is so proud of being a para that he even wears his wings on his camouflage uniform jacket — not a politically wise thing to do around people who remember Bloody Sunday, when the Parachute Regiment killed 11 people while opening up the Bogside.

Hank, or "Big Hank from the Anti-Tanks," as he was known in the old days, has a strong Newcastle accent.

"I don't try to hide it; there's no point. I had to come back here to keep the family together. But now it's more than that. It's real soldiering. We don't sod about with blanks or pretend war. We are always in it, and we know that any second we could walk into an ambush. We also have our own contacts, and often we take the war to the IRA too. I couldn't go back to peacetime-soldiering now."

—D.C.

ABOVE LEFT: Scores of terrorists and other criminals have fallen into hands of Security Forces by being "snared" at UDR vehicle checkpoints — conducted in fair weather and foul. Checkpoint guard in foreground totes FN/FAL L1A1 rifle. Note two modified Landrovers and smoke-grenade dispenser visible on one in foreground. BELOW LEFT: UDR search dog picks up "scent" of weapons/explosives cache concealed in hedgerow. Rifle is FN/FAL L1A1. Photos: British Army Info. Services.

# RUSSIA'S BORDERLINE DECISION

## USSR Overrated Carter's Nerve

by Anthony Mascarennas

*Reprinted with permission from the 28 December 1980 issue of the Sunday Times. © 1980 Times Newspapers Ltd., The Sunday Times.*

**N**EW evidence shows that the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 was triggered by the Iranian seizure of the American hostages in Teheran. The Russians misjudged the American mood and wrongly expected President Carter's response to be tougher.

The Russian aim was to move into western Afghanistan to secure a strategic advantage. But the Americans did not send troops into Iran or make any other military response, and by then the Soviet anxiety to get in first had sucked them into a wholesale invasion of Afghanistan, where they remain bogged down.

It now emerges that on 10 November 1979, six days after the American embassy hostages were taken, the Soviet Union asked the late President Hafizullah Amin of Afghanistan for the exclusive use of the Afghan military base at Shindand, near the Iranian border.

Shindand is within 90 minutes' flying time by helicopter to most parts of southern Iran and the Persian Gulf coast. A base there would give the Red Army a tremendous logistical advantage for intervention in the south should an American strike materialize. On Iran's northern borders, the Soviet Union already has 30 divisions poised: one-third of a million men.

### Original Plan

Russia's original plan to get the Shindand base has been revealed by one of Amin's mistresses, who does not wish to be identified for fear of reprisal. She said Amin became disenchanted with communism and with the Russians after the Soviet charge d'affaires had presented Moscow's demand.

She said: "Amin told me he would never agree to giving the Russians a military base in Afghanistan because the people would not tolerate it. He was very angry with the Russians but he also knew they would not give up easily because of the Iranian situation."

This account has been independently confirmed by another Amin confidant: a nephew, Zalmai, who was also his long-time bodyguard and has now fled the country.

When the Soviet Union was refused use of Shindand, the base it wanted badly, it became vital to seize it as soon as possible.

A scenario along these lines was disclosed to Indian Foreign Minister Narasimha Rao and his delegation during a visit to Moscow last April.

In discussions lasting 6½ hours, the Indians heard Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko admit that the Soviet troops had gone into Afghanistan in a bid to pre-empt the Americans. New Delhi has been at pains to keep quiet about it all.

"This was the message in the Kremlin shorthand," an Indian official told *The Sunday Times*. "They wanted logistical convenience to the south, and it happened to be Afghanistan. For this it became necessary to substitute a compliant Karmal for an obstructive Amin in Kabul. And the insurgency [Afghan internal revolt against the Marxist regime] provided the excuse."

This statement disproves the widely held theory — encouraged by Moscow to justify the invasion — that the Russians invaded Afghanistan to shore up the crumbling Kabul regime. The Marxist regime in Kabul was under some pressure from Islamic guerrillas operating along the Pakistan border in the east, but it was in no danger of falling.

The Soviet demand for a base at Shindand was the last straw for Amin and, according to his nephew Zalmai, he secretly began to plot to throw out the Russians,

as President Sadat had done in Egypt.

Diplomats in Kabul confirm that Amin made several overtures to Western embassies, including the West German and the Japanese.

Although Amin's reputation was scarcely lily white, the West committed one of its gravest errors in the Afghan crisis by ignoring his approaches.

Amin's intrigues in Kabul apparently had not gone unnoticed by the Russians. Some time toward the end of November 1979 they decided he must go. American analysis of information from satellite photographs and electronic monitoring confirms that it was then that the Soviet high command made the decision to mobilize for the invasion of Afghanistan.

On 28 November, Gen. Victor Seminovitch Papatun, first deputy interior minister of the Soviet Union, was sent to Kabul to prepare for the invasion and to get rid of Amin.

Amin's mistress and his nephew, Zalmai, confirm that Amin was drugged by his Russian cooks as two Red Army divisions were flown into Kabul over the Christmas holiday last year to spearhead the invasion.

### Kidnap Plan

Apparently Moscow's intention was to seize Amin, take him to the Soviet Union and install Babrak Karmal as the new president of Afghanistan. But the kidnap plan misfired, because at least one of Amin's Afghan bodyguards did not eat the drug-laced pudding prepared by the Russian cooks as part of an elaborate banquet for Amin.

When Papatun and a handpicked commando group backed by a squadron of tanks stormed the summer palace on the outskirts of Kabul, the bodyguard opened fire with a light machine gun and cut Papatun in two. The Russian troops went wild after seeing their general shot down — and killed Amin, his wife, children and servants.

But President Carter's refusal to be drawn into a military response in Iran left the Russians with nothing to pre-empt. In retrospect, their invasion of Afghanistan must be viewed as a serious miscalculation.

### Bogged Down

The Russians in Afghanistan have been bogged down in an expensive, debilitating military occupation whose effects are entirely negative — locally, in the region and worldwide.

But at least 30,000 of the 80,000 Russian troops in Afghanistan remain massed around the Shindand base and in the desolate Farah, Nimroz and Helmand Provinces in the southwest desert.

They are aimed straight at the Iranian border.



# FLOATING FREDDIE

## This Chicken's No Chicken

Text & Photos by Timothy Rauwald



Freddie makes sure that all chutes are packed properly.



**T**HIS bird may crow a lot, but he's no chicken — at least when it comes to jumping out of airplanes.

The 82nd Airborne Division's All Americans have among them Freddie Falcon (a rooster chicken, actually), of the 3rd Battalion (Airborne), 325th Infantry, Fort Bragg, N.C.

### Fowl Recruit

Freddie is a paratrooper, of sorts. Having made five jumps already, Freddie is the pride and joy of the 2nd "Falcon" Brigade.

The cocksure specimen of his species stands a devastating 16 inches tall and weighs in at a hefty 2 pounds, 7 ounces.

According to Command Sgt. Maj. Barney Razor of the 3/325th, Freddie only

makes his jumps in a laundry bag. Freddie is taken on board the aircraft perched upon a trooper's reserve parachute and remains there until just before jump time, when he's placed in the laundry bag for the trip down.

However, Cpl. Joseph Phillips did construct a parachute for Freddie. The miniature chute has everything a normal parachute has, only scaled down to bird size. When the fearless fowl made his first jump from a 34-foot tower, the new chute functioned perfectly, floating Freddie safely to the ground.

Back in the barracks, Freddie is like any other trooper in the division. On Saturday nights he doesn't enjoy being cooped up in the barracks so he heads for the clubs to find some good-looking chicks.

And how does the battalion comman-

der feel about having a full bird in his front yard all day? Speaking for him, Sgt. Maj. Razor says, "Freddie doesn't crow very much and he works for chicken feed."

### Fearless Fred

Some might tend to believe that the parachuting may have adverse effects on the chicken, but Freddie tends to disprove that. He's the only chicken in the battalion, but he is a true-blue falcon.

*(Reprinted with permission from SAM [Soldier, Sailor, Airman, Marine], January 1981.)*



Freddie's hand-picked CD (Chicken Dropping) Team prepares the fearless fowl for airborne ops.

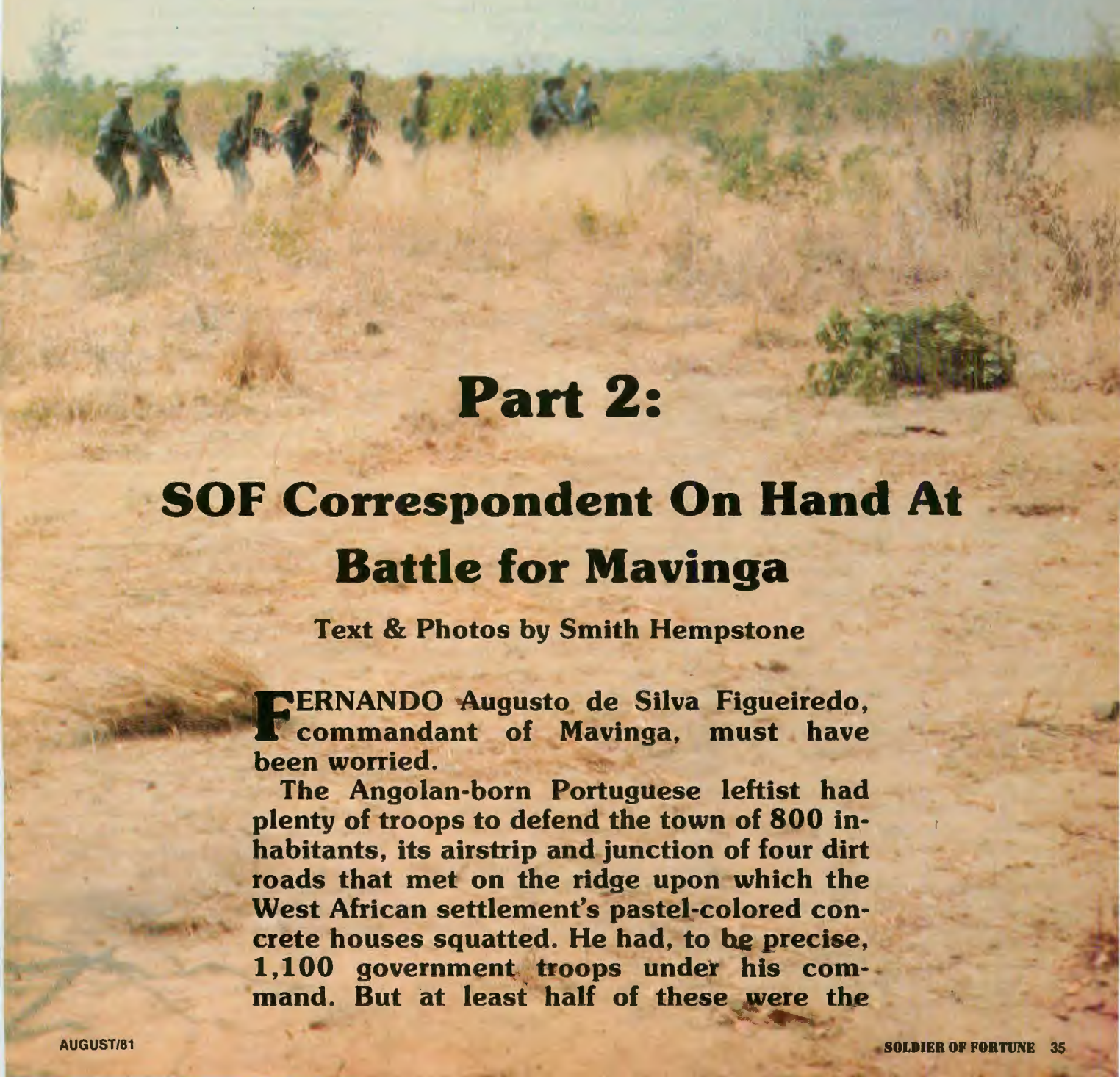


HALO jump into hot DZ — Freddie maneuvers around powerlines.



UNITA guerrillas move into Mavinga town.

# THE WAR THE WORLD FORGOT



## Part 2:

### SOF Correspondent On Hand At Battle for Mavinga

Text & Photos by Smith Hempstone

**F**ERNANDO Augusto de Silva Figueiredo, commandant of Mavinga, must have been worried.

The Angolan-born Portuguese leftist had plenty of troops to defend the town of 800 inhabitants, its airstrip and junction of four dirt roads that met on the ridge upon which the West African settlement's pastel-colored concrete houses squatted. He had, to be precise, 1,100 government troops under his command. But at least half of these were the

demoralized remnants of the garrisons of Luenge and Rivungo — towns to the south and east overrun earlier by troops of Jonas Malheiro Savimbi's anti-communist National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). De Silva Figueiredo had no Russian or East German advisers or Cuban troops at his disposal; indeed, he was the only white man in Mavinga last September.

The fall of Luenge and Rivungo left Mavinga the most exposed of the few towns left under Marxist control in vast Cuando-Cubango, the largest of Angola's 16 provinces, sprawling between Zaire, Zambia and South African-administered South West Africa. The rest of the sparsely populated province was controlled by Savimbi, the guerrilla leader who had fought the Portuguese colonial government for a decade, until its withdrawal in 1975. He had battled on for another five years against the Marxist Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), which was propped up by 20,000 Cuban bayonets, and assisted by 3,000 East Germans of the new Afrika Korps and 1,500 Russians.

The dry, featureless countryside was so infested with UNITA guerrillas that Mavinga had to be supplied by air. De Silva Figueiredo had ringed the airstrip, the administrative center and the grass huts occupied by Mavinga's 800 Gangala tribesmen with entrenchments. But he had neither barbed wire nor landmines.

Having been born in Angola, the 25-year-old soldier, one of 2,000 white Angolans serving in its army, may have sensed uneasiness among the town's African population. It wouldn't have been anything you could put your finger on. But two new fetish shrines — bits of bone and animal skin decorated with feathers — had appeared outside town on the Rivungo road. And the commandant may have surmised that his patrols had not been pushing quite as far into the bush as their leaders claimed.

Still, the big Russian-built "Antonov" transport plane arrived on schedule the afternoon of 18 September, stuffed with food, medicine and ammunition. Perhaps de Silva Figueiredo thought that he was beginning to imagine things.

He was not. For the past 10 days, three UNITA regular battalions — 1,400 men — had been slipping silently through the bush, taking up positions encircling Mavinga. Col. Antoine Rinalto, one of Savimbi's veteran commanders, had manhandled 82mm mortars, RPG-2 rocket-grenade launchers, American 75mm recoilless rifles and two captured "Stalin Organs" (multiple 122mm rocket-launchers) into position around the town.

Special five-man UNITA recon teams, dressed in captured MPLA "leopard-spot" dungarees, had made their way into Mavinga and returned with sketches of every gun position in town. On Savimbi's orders, Rinalto waited until the "Antonov" had come and gone before launching his attack: He wanted Mavinga's larders full when his troops stormed it.

Finally, a half-hour before dawn on 19 September, Rinalto blew his whistle and the UNITA gunners unleashed a 400-round barrage. The MPLA guns replied, but were soon silenced: They had only muzzle flashes for targets, while the UNITA gunners had pinpointed the position of every government battery. Then the three battalions of UNITA troops, with a shout of "kwacha!" (forward), swept across the airstrip into Mavinga.

A few MPLA soldiers fought bravely. But those demoralized by the routs at



Tribal fetish shrine set up by UNITA forces outside Mavinga town warning Angolan government troops and Cuban and East German advisers not to set foot outside. They stopped patrolling, thus making it easier for UNITA to move in close and observe prior to launching attack on the town.

Luenge and Rivungo, groping for their boots in the dark, had little stomach for the fight. With the native quarter aflame, the garrison broke for the depression of the riverbed in front of the town and fled west in the direction of Cuito Cuanavale, the government stronghold (and Cuban airbase) 100 miles to the northwest.

Later, when the battle was over, 20-year-old Joao Batiste, the only MPLA soldier taken prisoner in Mavinga, told this correspondent that no one had given the order to withdraw.

"Suddenly," Batiste said, "everyone was running for the Cubia riverbed. I started to run, but was hit in the arm and the chest. I fell, and could not get up."

Batiste said he had been conscripted from jail, where he'd been sent for not paying his hut-tax, and he had not been paid in six months.

It was pretty much over by a few minutes after 0600: Barely an hour of fighting. A small party of Rinalto's troops pursued the MPLA garrison up the riverbed, killing the stragglers. The rest established a defensive perimeter and began the systematic looting of Mavinga.

The haul, by Angolan standards, was a rich one: Fourteen 12.7mm dual-purpose ack-ack guns, five 82mm mortars, five SAM-7 missiles, more than 300 AK-47s, RPG-2s and RPKs, 12 Star trucks (bringing Savimbi's motor-transport battalion to 72 vehicles), a brand-new Land Rover, thousands of rounds of ammunition and tons of food, medicine and clothing — enough gear to equip half a battalion of UNITA troops. Rinalto radioed to Likua, 100 miles to the southeast, for UNITA trucks to come and collect his booty.

The butcher's bill, according to the colonel: four UNITA dead and 27 wounded. The bearded officer reported that 60 MPLA soldiers had been killed in Mavinga, and that "radio intercepts indicate many more are dying on the road to Cuito Cuanavale; they have no food and very little water, and it is a very long way. Most of the wounded will die."

When I entered Mavinga with support troops hours after the assault, the native quarter lay in ashes and 42 civilians, mostly old people, women and children, sat huddled under the guns of UNITA sentries. The town's dusty streets were littered with empty food cans, abandoned boots, articles of clothing, shell casings and other residue of war. Ammunition was exploding in burning buildings. Two dogs howled mournfully for their departed masters. Vultures flew high overhead, eyeing the bloating bodies of the 60 government dead. Away to the west, in the direction of Cuito Cuanavale, one could hear the popping of small arms.

Savimbi's troops, after smashing everything they couldn't carry away (and they carried away some rather remarkable things, including bedsteads and easy chairs), daubed the wrecked buildings with UNITA slogans before pulling out of town to take up blocking positions in the bush to await an MPLA counterattack that never materialized. An "Ilyushin" made a single pass at the ruined town and dropped two bombs before returning to Cuito Cuanavale. Two weeks later, government helicopters landed a battalion of troops near the town; but they apparently got lost and had to be pulled out again without making contact with UNITA patrols.



Mavinga was, to put it mildly, no Stalingrad. But its fall was indicative of a new strength on Savimbi's part. While his troops presently lack the anti-tank and anti-aircraft weapons necessary to seize and hold major population centers, his 16,000 regulars and 5,000 militiamen are more than a match for the government's forces in the bush and small towns.

Since Mao Tse-tung made his long march to the caves of Yunan, it has been accepted as a given that communists are the masters of guerrilla warfare. But after 15 years in the field, the Swiss-educated Savimbi (he holds a doctorate in political science) is proving that supposition false.

Savimbi claims he controls at least a third of Angola (which is more than twice the size of Texas) and has a "presence" in another third of the



**ABOVE:** UNITA troops display Angolan government flag taken during raid on Mavinga. **LEFT:** UNITA Leader Jonas Savimbi.

country: He is weak in the north, once the stamping ground of Holden Roberto's National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), and in major cities such as Luanda and Lobito. He says he has the support of his own Ovimbundu tribe, and of the Chokwe and Luena tribes, plus portions of the Bakongo and Gangala, nearly half of Angola's seven million people.

With Western diplomatic support, some financial assistance and guaranteed access to certain types of military hardware, Savimbi vows he could turn Angola into an African Vietnam for the Kremlin and its Cuban surrogates. And he could be correct: The war, which is costing Moscow \$1.6 million a day, is being fought (in contrast to the conflict in Afghanistan) far from the locus of Russian power. Neighboring Zaire, Zambia and South African-administered South West Africa could provide supply routes and



sanctuaries for Savimbi's guerrillas if they were convinced of Washington's determination to see the war through to its end. Unfortunately, the American track record in Angola leaves a good deal to be desired.

In the decade leading up to the 1975 withdrawal of the Portuguese after 400 years in Angola (which served as a major source of slaves for the sugar plantations of colonial Brazil), there were three guerrilla movements fighting for the oil-, coffee- and diamond-rich country's independence from Lisbon:

- Holden Roberto's National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA), a pro-Western movement strong in the northern part of the country. The FNLA was based primarily on the Bakongo tribe, which spills across the frontier into Zaire. Roberto, who had his headquarters in Kinshasa (formerly Leopoldville), was the darling of President Mobutu Sese Seko of Zaire, and of the Central Intelligence Agency.

- Agostinho Neto's Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), an urban-based group led by Marxist intellectuals, most of whom are mulattos (seven of the 10 members of the ruling politburo are of mixed blood), and drawing some support from the Kimbundu and Lunda tribes. The MPLA, the chosen instrument of the Kremlin for more than 20 years, was backed by Portugal's revolutionary leftist government in 1974-75, and since has received massive aid from the Soviet Union, East Germany, Cuba and other members of the communist bloc.

- Savimbi's UNITA, originally based on the populous Ovimbundu tribe (40 percent of Angola's population), but now enjoying considerable support among other tribal groups. Pro-Western UNITA has had limited and occasional aid from the United States (until prohibited by the Clark Amendment in 1976; the Reagan administration is seeking repeal of that amendment), South Africa, France, Communist China, Morocco, Saudi Arabia and the Persian Gulf emirates. Some conservative African nations that recognize the Luanda regime (the U.S. does not, despite Andy Young's view that the Cubans "bring a certain stability and order to Angola") occasionally turn a blind eye to the unmarked planes that fly supplies and reporters into Savimbi's Cuando-Cubango base.

Savimbi, who studied medicine in Portugal from 1959 until he left for Switzerland in 1961, a step ahead of PIDE (the Portuguese secret police), served as "foreign minister" of Roberto's FNLA from 1962 to 1964. In 1964, feeling that Roberto was too Bakongo-oriented and prone to wage war from a discreet distance, Savimbi and 11 followers left FNLA to found



ABOVE: UNITA guerrillas brandish weapons in victory salute after capturing Mavinga town. Weapons are Hungarian Short Rifles with folding stocks (third from right for example) and AKMs. LEFT: Dead Angolan government soldier, slain during battle for Mavinga. RIGHT: Loot taken by UNITA guerrillas at Mavinga included several versions of AK rifle series, heavier weapons and an East German truck. BELOW: UNITA troops guard Angolan government soldier captured during battle for Mavinga. Guerrillas on right and left have AKMs and man in center a Chinese Mod. 66.

UNITA. With the Kremlin supporting MPLA and the U.S. playing footsy with FNLA, UNITA's choice of a sponsor was dictated by elimination rather than ideology: Communist China. After nine months of guerrilla training in Peking, the young nationalists returned clandestinely in pairs to take up the struggle against the Portuguese. After 15 years of guerrilla warfare, six of the 12 survived, including Savimbi's top lieutenants, N'Zau Puna, his political adviser, Samuel Chiwale, his ablest general, and George Sangumbe, UNITA's secretary general. Most are Christians, and many, like Savimbi (whose father, a railway stationmaster, was converted by an American missionary), are Protestants.

From 1965 until 1974, the three groups fought the Portuguese colonial army, South West Africa People's





later the same month. The three parties agreed to divide the cabinet portfolios of Angola's independence and proposed to hold elections immediately thereafter.

But the Marxist MPLA never intended to participate in the elections, and for the best of all possible reasons: They knew a mulatto-led movement couldn't win an African election. Accordingly, in August 1975, MPLA troops unleashed an 11-hour mortar barrage on the compound where the FNLA and UNITA cabinet ministers were housed; even with Portuguese help, they barely escaped with their lives. Fighting among the three groups spread to the rest of the country as the FNLA and UNITA pulled out of the Luanda coalition government.

Neto had made the first of his many visits to Havana as early as 1966, and his Cuban friends were on hand to help him seize power in Angola. The first 250 Cuban advisers arrived in Angola in June of 1975, five months before independence, and some of these took part in the assault on the non-Marxist members of the transition government, which the combat-weary, 24,000-man

own choosing, against the will of the Angolan people. There was to be no nonsense about such fripperies as elections and majority rule.

Understandably, neither Roberto nor Savimbi was prepared to accept this "fait accompli." Nor, to his credit, was President Gerald Ford willing to extend diplomatic recognition to a government of such dubious paternity.

Savimbi, assisted by a mini-blitzkrieg of 1,200 troops from South West Africa (who hoped to solve the SWAPO problem by destroying their Angolan bases), registered big gains in the south, taking the major ports of Benguela and Lobito, and pushing to within 150 miles of Luanda.

Roberto, with the first of some \$28 million in CIA assistance (minus a little that went to Savimbi, and a big cut taken by corrupt Zairean officials), attacked in the north, and by independence day was within 20 miles of Luanda.

Then the roof fell in. Bolstered by round-the-clock airlifts of heavy guns, tanks and Stalin Organs, some 20,000 Cubans, supported by MiGs, counterattacked, routing Roberto's forces and stalling the UNITA-South African drive on the capital from the south.

At the same time, the U.S. Congress — still in a state of shock after the fall of Saigon earlier in the year — refused to appropriate additional funds to assist Roberto or Savimbi in their fight against the communists, a move that Ford aptly described as "a deep tragedy" and an "abdication of responsibility."

Secretary of State Henry Kissinger vowed to continue to combat, with whatever means were left to the administration, the imposition by force of a Soviet-backed regime in Angola. At the same time, however, the administration denied collusion with South Africa in its intervention. Isolated and fearful of total United Nations economic sanctions, Pretoria withdrew its troops back into South West Africa, abandoning Angola to its fate.

(It can be argued that the Western backdown in Angola, a nation far from either the Soviet Union or Cuba, convinced the Kremlin that the United States would not respond to Russian intervention anywhere, and that this, coupled with the debacle in Iran, led ultimately to the Soviet rape of Afghanistan and the destruction of what remained of detente.)

With Cuban-piloted MiGs, Russian T-54 tanks and Stalin Organs leading the way, the MPLA and its Cuban allies quickly routed Roberto's lightly-armed forces in the north, with most of his surviving guerrillas fleeing back across the border into Zaire. Roberto



Organization (SWAPO) guerrillas, Katangan gendarmes, South African long-range penetration groups and Rhodesian Special Air Service troopers with varying degrees of success.

In the summer of 1974, after the overthrow by leftist officers of conservative Portuguese Prime Minister Marcello Caetano (who died 26 October of last year in Brazilian exile), Savimbi initiated talks with Neto and Roberto. His objective was to forge a united front to negotiate a ceasefire with the Portuguese, hold elections and arrange for the transition to independence. With the assistance of the late Jomo Kenyatta, pro-Western president of Kenya, such a tripartite pact was signed by Savimbi, Neto and Roberto at Mombasa in January, 1975, and later confirmed in the Alvor agreement endorsed by the Portuguese

Portuguese army was unable (or unwilling) to stop. As more than 100,000 Portuguese civilians fled the country, more Cubans, Russians and East Germans poured into Luanda by air (from a Brazzaville staging area) and sea.

When independence day arrived, the MPLA and its Russian friends were in firm control of Luanda, and most of Angola was aflame. The Portuguese army and administration, riddled with leftists and heartily sick of a war that had absorbed half of Portugal's budget, simply turned over the machinery of government in Luanda to Neto's MPLA — as it had done to Samora Machel's Marxist FRELIMO movement in Mozambique — and sailed away.

The Soviet Union and its Cuban surrogates had unilaterally brought to power a minority government of its

*Continued on page 72*



## CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

● Second Annual Soldier of Fortune Convention Headquarter Hotel will be the classy Radisson Scottsdale Resort and Racquet Club. The Sheraton Scottsdale Inn will be the shooters' Headquarters Hotel.

● All three matches are IPSC-sanctioned.

● The Assault Rifle Match will also be recognized as the First IPSC National Practical Rifle Championship.

● All individuals interested in competing, send resumes to SOF Convention

Director. Competitors will be selected by committee.

● 5,000-meter combat run and shoot. If you are interested in competing in this event please contact us immediately as the number of contestants may be limited. Details will be mailed in the near future to interested parties.

● SOF pre-convention courses will run from 0800 12 September to 16 September. Limited number of slots are available. Write immediately for further information.



# Fellow Adventurers!

You are cordially invited to the

## SECOND ANNUAL SOLDIER OF FORTUNE CONVENTION

**17-20 September 1981**  
**Scottsdale, Arizona**

The SOF CONVENTION is being held in conjunction with the 2nd Annual SOF Invitational Combined Shooting Championship — a shotgun, pistol and assault-rifle combat shoot to pick the top all-around combat marksman in the United States. One hundred and fifty top shooters will compete, by invitation only, for over \$20,000 in prize money, guns and gear.

The theme of the convention will be "A Salute to Vietnam Veterans." The Colonel "Bull" Simons Memorial Award will be dedicated to all Vietnam veterans and will be accepted for them by a Medal of Honor winner. The keynote speaker for the banquet will be selected at a later date. Once again, cammies or police or military uniforms will be preferred dress.

Preregistration, which closes Aug. 17, is \$75. For those who register after Aug. 17, the fee will be \$100. Fee includes: (1) Banquet (2) Transportation to all events (3) Convention T-Shirt (4) Admission to Exhibition Hall, Invitational Match, all demonstrations, outstanding action movies, Vietnam Art Exhibit, Cocktail Hour and all seminars.

Seminars will include: Special Operations Group in Vietnam, presented by vets who conducted cross-border operations in Laos, Cambodia and North Vietnam; POW/MIA; Police Survival; Desert Survival/Escape & Evasion; Survival Medicine & Gunshot Wounds; Russian Small-Unit Tactics & Weapons; plus others on Southern Africa, Central America and Afghanistan.

A limited number of display tables for exhibitors and manufacturers will be available (first-come, first-served). Interested parties contact SOF Exhibitor Coordinator (303) 449-3750 immediately for space reservations and further information.

Room assignments at the Headquarters Hotels will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Rooms will cost \$30 per night, single or double occupancy, in the Radisson and \$35 per night, single or double occupancy, in the Sheraton.

Hotel reservations will be handled by Jeana Nugent of The Meeting Planners and Miles Travel (see hotel reservation form below). Miss Nugent will also handle pre- and post-convention travel for those who desire it.

Preceding the convention, SOF is also offering a limited number of spaces — on a first-come, first-served basis — in the following courses running from 0800 12 September to 1700 16 September: (1) Combat Pistolcraft (2) Assault-Rifle (3) Combat-Shotgun (4) Desert Survival/Escape & Evasion (5) Survival Medicine and Combat Wounds (6) 5,000-Meter Combat Run & Shoot.

Costs for courses, and cost and prizes for the 5,000-Meter Combat Run & Shoot, will be determined later. All convention activities are tentative. Do not delay! Fill out the convention-registration and hotel-reservation forms below and mail them to their respective addresses today!

### CONVENTION REGISTRATION

Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Current or previous military  
or police affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

YES, I'm coming to the 2nd Annual SOF Convention, check enclosed for:

Convention Registration (\$75): \_\_\_\_\_

1st Airborne Jump Fee, qualified jumpers only (\$25): \_\_\_\_\_

1st Airborne Jump School, includes one jump (\$95): \_\_\_\_\_

Total Fee: \_\_\_\_\_ Check Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

Or, please charge my \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MasterCard

Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Detailed information on courses preceding the conference, which are scheduled for 12-16 September, will be mailed directly to persons who indicate an interest in attending by checking the corresponding box(es):  Combat Pistolcraft;  Assault Rifle;  Combat Shotgun;  Desert Survival/Escape & Evasion;  Survival Medicine/Combat Wounds;  5,000-Meter Combat Run & Shoot (date not set).

MAIL TO: SOF Convention, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306

### HOTEL REGISTRATION

Name (Print) \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

#### HOTEL CHOICE

1. Radisson Scottsdale (conventioners),  
\$30 per night,  
single or double occupancy: \_\_\_\_\_
2. Sheraton Scottsdale (shooters & conventioners),  
\$35 per night,  
single or double occupancy: \_\_\_\_\_

Arrival date: \_\_\_\_\_ Departure date: \_\_\_\_\_


If hotel requested is not available, nearest available hotel will be assigned. Rates are subject to applicable taxes. Rooms confirmed only with a check for the first-night or American Express card number. Make checks payable to preferred hotel. Registrants will be charged for the first night if reservations are not cancelled at least 48 hours prior to arrival.

AMEX No. \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO: Jeana Nugent, The Meeting Planners and Miles Travel, 5656 East Orange Blossom, Phoenix, AZ 85018. (Special group airfares may also be available through Miss. Nugent. Call 602-231-0200.)

## Sappers Inside the Wire

# NIGHT AT LANDING ZONE



**30** April 1970, Landing Zone Siberia, 35 miles west of Chu Lai, Vietnam, 0230 hours. An explosion rocked me from a restive sleep. Since we had seen minimal enemy action during the past eight months, especially around our fire-support bases, I wasn't overly concerned. I monitored the radio in my bunker, listening for confirmation of my guess that it had been one of our claymore mines. Sometimes they were accidentally detonated by a clumsily placed boot or butt.

Instead, the call came for a medic to report to Bunker No. 4. Maybe an unfortunate GI had wounded himself; not an uncommon occurrence when men mix with mechanical killing devices. Doc bolted from our bunker, armed only with his aid bag.

Minutes passed — a second explosion in the direction of Bunker No. 4. I pulled on a pair of Ho Chi Minh sandals, stuffed a few fragmentation grenades into my cut-off fatigue trousers, slung a bandolier over my shoulder, grabbed my M16 and raced over to Bunker No. 4.

Acrid smoke hung in the tropical night air and billowed out of the bunker, backlit by a descending flare. Inside, pieces of the three dead Americans splattered the walls and ceiling. The floor held the rest, soaking in an inch of blood.

Inside the bunker, I knelt to carry out the largest form I could find. As I raised the man in my arms I heard a dull thud land at my feet. Thinking it was an enemy grenade, I quickly kicked the object out into the illuminated night — to find it was an arm belonging to the man I was carrying.

LZ Siberia had come under intense mortar and rocket-propelled-grenade fire. A ground assault by some 30 extensively trained, surreptitious sappers from North Vietnam was in progress. Helicopter dust-offs touched down and took off, evacuating the wounded, the dead and the unrecognizable fragments of human flesh.

Returning from the evacuation site, I spotted what appeared to be a head popping up and down not 12 feet from the bunker. Thinking it might be a GI in

# TACK ON ONE SIBERIA

by Robert L. Delzell II



shock, I called to the staring figure. It was an enemy sapper, inside our perimeter! I fired several times at the intruder, then threw a few frags in his direction. I proceeded to check the location and found nothing. I learned later that my grenade detonated directly under the sapper, hurling his body some 50 yards down the hill.

Walking like a weak-kneed invalid, I continued my sweep of the bunker line. An artillery illumination round cracked the darkness with burning clarity. As I stood silhouetted against the hill, the attacking ground force directed AK-47 fire my way.

I spotted a hole and jumped in — to find four enemy sappers preparing satchel charges to fling at the artillery pieces. Their eyes met mine. I hesitated for a second in disbelief, then frantically started pulling the trigger of my M16, being so close that aiming was unnecessary. I got off four rounds when my weapon clicked (in the excitement I'd forgotten to reload).

One of the three remaining sappers picked up his AK-47, turning it into my

chest. Another pulled the string on a Chi Com grenade. I jumped backwards out of that hole and fell into another one. The grenade exploded, I cleared my weapon, crammed in another magazine and popped my head up to see the three sappers scrambling toward me in an attempt to get out of the compound. I fired at two and the third slid into a hole not four feet from mine. I pulled the pin on a frag and counted, not wanting to give the enemy time enough to throw it back.

After the grenade went off, I looked around to see if there were any signs of movement within the bunker line. None. I crawled out of the hole and into a trench line that connected intermittently between bunkers. I found an abandoned ANPRC-25 radio to be my only companion. From the concertina wire I could hear enemy wounded moaning. I heard others crawling, sometimes running. I found a half-empty case of frags and began to lob them in the direction of the sounds, until my supply ran out.

Fortunately, someone had called in a

Spooky flare ship equipped with mini-guns. I contacted her pilot but, in order to effectively place her fire, my location had to be pinpointed. I attempted to mark it by throwing trip flares to my front. Unfortunately, every time I threw one, its impact upon the ground extinguished it almost immediately.

Running out of flares, I became desperate. The enemy seemed to be moving more quickly each time a flare went out. I decided to pull the pin on a flare and place it delicately on the mound of dirt directly behind me. This time the flare marked my location perfectly — both for the pilot and for the enemy.

An enormous fusillade of enemy fire poured over my head as I huddled in the trench. I gave the pilot a compass direction and a distance. The mini-guns burst out toward the concertina wire, their fire incredibly smooth and fluid. It whistled through the grass, the wire and the bodies of advancing and wounded sappers. The illumination was maintained until dawn.

In the morning we ran a sweep of the perimeter and found a total of 11 dead sappers. The sapper who died in the hole next to mine clutched a grenade in his right hand.

This action marked the initial phase of an enemy offensive that would leave my company, Delta Fourth Battalion, 31st Infantry, 196th Light Infantry Brigade, Americal Division, with less than half field strength. For my participation in the defense of Landing Zone Siberia I was awarded the first of two Silver Stars accumulated during my tour in 'Nam.

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## HIEP DUC VALLEY 1970 WINTER/SPRING OFFENSIVE

by Charles JandECKA

Hiep Duc Valley was hot in late April 1970, not quite with the blistering heat of June or July, but hot enough to make you check those canteens regularly. For us grunts, it was about to become even hotter — in terms of action. It had been six months since Charlie had worked up his nerve to invade our tropical paradise. Aside from an occasional booby trap or running gun battle with an elusive NVA, the monsoon season had been relatively quiet. But those of us who could read trail signs and who had learned to watch closely the living habits of the natives knew the crap was about to hit the fan.

It was no real surprise when sappers hit LZ Siberia, a small fire base located along the Song Thu Bon River at the far western end of the valley. The attack placed B Company in real danger. We were about four miles west of Siberia in an isolated hamlet called Phuoc Son. Our assignment was to monitor unusual activity in the area

with recon patrols and night listening posts.

I remember one time when Swamp Rat and I were out on a short excursion and stopped at one of the Bon's tributaries for water. Although we heard and saw no one, we strongly felt the presence of other beings close at hand. After several quiet minutes, we boldly but carefully moved on. These same persons made their presence known at night by probing all our laager positions. No one fell asleep on guard duty in Phuoc Son.

When Siberia was hit we were ordered to move east — ASAP. The enemy clearly anticipated that our march would follow the old French road (Highway Number 534) which provided the most direct and easiest route back to Bing Hoa and Siberia. It also provided an excellent ambush site; one mile of Number 534 stretched through a canyon of sorts formed by steep, rolling hills. Our gutsy, intelligent commanding officer (CO) chose to lead us along a far more difficult path which wove through the jungle south of the road.

This completely surprised Charlie whom our point man caught digging fox holes where the path crossed a small stream. Charlie took an unscheduled lunch break, swallowed a burst from an M16 and crawled off somewhere to digest it. We beat the bush for more of his buddies but eventually pushed east toward My Luu and more-open terrain. Jungle fighting has its advantages, but it is the last place you want to run out of ammo or get wounded.

The NVA were really ticked off by now. They had failed to overrun Siberia, and their other prize — B Company — had eluded the snare. The situation was definitely serious. Our CO kept us on the move constantly for the next 72 hours. The company would split up into platoons only to reunite unexpectedly. We moved our night laagers a hundred yards or so at least once after dark.

There is no doubt that these tactics kept us from a savage, concerted attack, although we did make light contact on several occasions. We certainly were not the Lone Rangers in the valley though. The entire battalion (4/31) was in over its head. We needed time, supplies and support.

Our maneuvers bought us the time and supplies. The support came from neighboring U.S. and RVN battalions — infantry, mechanized and artillery. The stroke that broke the back of the offensive, however, came when big Air Force birds dropped their payloads among the foothills of the Nui Chom mountain range, killing beaucoup NVA. Like the enemy, we grunts had no idea the bombs were to be dropped. And although we were at least four miles off and across the valley when

they exploded, I personally almost wet my pants. Thanks, Uncle Sam!

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## IT HAPPENED TO ME

The progress of "Night Attack on Landing Zone Siberia" from the SOF mail room to publication illustrates three copy-editing points: the importance of article length, appropriate subject matter and relevance to other SOF articles. To explain these points as they relate to Robert Delzell's article may help demystify the copy selection process at SOF and help potential authors before they set pen to paper or fingers to typewriter keys.

I received Delzell's story as an It-Happened-to-Me submission early last year. My initial reaction: it's too long for the column's 500-word copy length. I could have rejected it — but it was an excellent action story and SOF tries to run at least one Vietnam article or column per issue. I therefore recommended that we run "Siberia" as a short one- or two-page feature, and our other editors agreed with me.

We wrote Delzell, requesting photographs: feature articles require illustration (and we prefer photos with It Happened to Me and I Was There — although we accept good stories without them). Delzell was able to send only one photograph. Although we would have to find more before the article could run, we typeset it and put it into our Vietnam-article file during the summer of 1980.

This January I opened Charles JandECKA's It-Happened-to-Me submission. My initial reaction: reject, explaining that it was an overview rather than a personal experience, which is what we're looking for in It Happened to Me and I Was There.

But then I read it a second time and the words "Landing Zone Siberia" leaped out at me. I went to the Vietnam-article file and pulled out Delzell's article. Bingo! The two pieces complemented one another — Delzell's giving the personal action and JandECKA's the overview. I recommended we run JandECKA's account as a sidebar — or supplementary article — with "Night Attack on Landing Zone Siberia." Again, our other editors agreed with me.

We accepted "Hiep Duc Valley." The separate parts had come together — and SOF had a new feature article.

—M.L. Jones



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# MARINE RECON

## Part 2: SOF Staffer Joins Night Scuba Ops in Puerto Rico

LEFT: Recon on guard in Puerto Rican bush, armed with M16A1. BELOW: Recon in bush with M16A1. BOTTOM: Marine preparing equipment for mission.



**Text & Photos  
by Fred Reed**

**A** molten Puerto Rican sunset glowed over black water, slowly burning out to a sullen smear low on the rim of the Atlantic. We moved toward Pineros Island, eight Marines in a rubber boat, the soft slap of waves audible over the muffled chuffing of the outboard. Behind us followed another boat full of Marines crouched between the gunnels, bush hats low over faces painted in evil patterns of green-and-black camouflage. The men in my boat were silent, staring into the immensity of the sky. They sat with their knees to their chests to avoid 16 scuba tanks crammed into every available space. We looked like a half-dozen mouldy corpses going to war in a bathtub.

On the long ride from Roosevelt Roads, I went over the details of our mission, which was to inspect an ICBM silo on an island belonging to an unnamed country — obviously Cuba,



Photo: U.S.M.C.

although the CO was careful to talk of "Country A" and "Country B" — to determine whether it was secretly being made operational, and how to destroy it if necessary. Afterward, we'd link up with partisan forces on the beach.

Then I sank into myself, caught up in the tropical night. Puerto Rico can be a shock for anyone who spent time in Vietnam. Its brilliant green hills and humid nights are much like those of Southeast Asia. I remembered long crazy nights on the Mekong ammo run to Phnom Penh, trips up the Cai Be with the ARVN Navy after the GIs left Saigon, the lap of waves against shot-up tugs at Vung Tau. I didn't know what the other men were thinking. Many were too young to have been to Vietnam. Still, Marines don't change much.

"All right, cut the dreaming. Let's get suited up," said Gunny St. Pierre. Pineros grew nearer, a dark mass in the smoldering light. We stopped 500 yards away and shot an azimuth to the beach. St. Pierre was a volatile French Canadian with an olive bandana around his head. At 36, he can run 15 miles in Puerto Rico's humid heat. Superman himself couldn't do it; not in his prime after three cups of coffee.

It is not easy for several men to squirm and twist into underwater gear in a loaded Zodiac boat, but we managed it somehow. No one said much: Recon keep quiet as much by instinct as by plan. I moved slowly in the tangled mass of equipment, and stuffed my fins between my tanks and the next pair to prevent clanking. Military diving is not a graceful business: Everyone wore complete jungle utilities, boots, rifle belt, rifle, UDT (Underwater Demolitions Team) life vest, regulator, tanks, dive watch, knife, day-night flare — all the encumbering gear needed underwater and in the bush. We carried no canteens, which can cause buoyancy problems unless completely filled. A hollow hiss came as men tested their regulators with a few quick breaths. The moist air smelled of neoprene and grease paint.

I had been around these men long enough to know some of them. They were good, solid troopers with some wild characters among them — the company cook had a T-shirt that said "Death From Within" — but in the gloom they became anonymous shapes, mushroom-headed shadows in rumpled bush hats. War has come a long way: from the glamour of the knights to the stealthy efficiency of Recon. The sunset died, fading sharply from blood red to dark blue.

"In ze zhoup," said St. Pierre, who has never lost his childhood accent. An intelligent man with the precision and crispness of a German, St. Pierre sometimes bellows and roars in French when angry. A man rolled backward into the black water with a muffled splash. Another followed, and another. St. Pierre tapped me on the shoulder and I leaned backward. There came the sudden shock of water and a cold grab at my crotch, then a chill trickling as the sea worked its way into the recesses of my boots. Entering black restless water always gives me a moment's pause. The ocean at night has an inhabited look, and there are predators out there. But, for some reason, the anxiety leaves underwater.

I deflated my BC (buoyancy compensator) and sank. The boat disappeared and I hung in unearthly gloom. The undersea world is a strange place at night. No sound came but the loud hiss of air through the regulator and the shuddering rumble of escaping bubbles. *Ssssss . . . wubbawubbawubba*. Just enough light penetrated the water from the fading sunset to turn the team into eerily swimming shapes in a curious dimness that wasn't light and yet wasn't quite darkness. They disappeared intermittently behind the silvery cloud of bubbles rising in front of my faceplate.

We flailed about in the night, trying to form up for the swim to the beach. One of the twisting shadows handed me a loop of the budweiser line, a 120-foot rappel line with butterfly knots forming loops every 12 feet. With no lights and little visibility, men could easily be separated from the team. The line kept them together. I rolled on my back and looked up. Waves rippled and shone in the cold light of the surface as if in a shifting sea of mercury. Occasionally, a faceplate glinted demonically from one of the writhing shapes. The line formed and we prepared to swim the 500 yards to the beach, hanging on alternate sides of the line so as not to kick each other. A man who had his mask kicked off and lost would probably finish the dive without it, but it was better not to have to find out.

We streamed off into the hissing emptiness. The lead man held a flutter board in front of him: a beveled sheet of plywood with a compass and depth gauge. He had to keep us precisely on azimuth and at depth — no more than 40 feet. Another man somewhere in the line carried a waterproofed ammunition box containing a PRC-77 radio.





**F**EW people realize how physically fit Recons are.

**They are awesome.**

**LEFT:** Recon diver checking gear for night op. **BELOW:** Recons practicing for hydrographic survey. **BOTTOM:** Recon with body art and M16A1.



There aren't enough combat swimmers in the Navy, even counting the SEALs, to inspire the Navy to get a good watertight box sealed with O-rings, so each outfit has to come up with its own method. Sometimes it works, and sometimes the Navy gets to buy new radios.

For an immeasurable time we swam through the murk. I could see nothing except a pair of rhythmically waving fins in front of me like some aquatic bat flapping through a haunted ocean. We were using twin-80s — 80-cubic-foot aluminum tanks which are usually filled to 3,000 pounds per square inch. I fumbled in the water behind me for my pressure gauge and got a shock: it showed 2,000, psi, indicating that I was using air very fast. It occurred to me that the Recons were probably in such good shape that they weren't using any air at all and, as I didn't want to have to surface and embarrass myself, I finished the swim practically holding my breath. Later I learned that my tanks had been filled only to 2,400 psi.

Few people realize how physically fit Recons are. They are awesome. Most of them have weightlifter's physiques, because most of them are weightlifters, but their endurance is their real strength. Saying that

they can run 15 miles is not very impressive in an age when the roads are full of lawyers and secretaries practicing for marathons. The catch is that Recons can do it in the tropic sun — and most of them do not have the distance runner's slender build.

I found out the hard way when I asked 1st Lt. Floyd Houston if he would like to do an easy five miles. This is my usual lunch-hour run and, since I can do twice that and live, it didn't seem much of a challenge. At 11:00 we set out. The sun was hot. Humidity was pushing a hundred percent. The sun got hotter. After a mile it got very much hotter. After two miles, I was within 500 yards of heat stroke and definitely crapped out — panting, sweating like a race horse and dizzy with the heat. Houston was not even breathing hard — and I am not exaggerating to make a good story.

When I joined them in Puerto Rico, they had been training hard for several weeks on four hours' sleep a night: 10-mile runs, all-night ops, long conditioning swims and considerable beer-drinking in free time. They were still alert, vigorous and in good spirits. *That's* stamina. Anybody can do almost anything for a short while, but try to keep it up.

For what seemed a long time we finned slowly through the void, seeing only an occasional startled fish dart out of sight. Finally, nothingness below dissolved into black ooze, dropped off again to gray and turned black again. We were entering the shallows. We stopped in three feet of water and broke the surface. A hundred feet away the faint gray line of a narrow beach stopped in a looming wall of jungle. Heads appeared all around me, keeping low in the water. From the west, the distant lights of the harbor glittered in the ebony water, sending out long fingers of light that pointed right at us. We cached the scuba gear in the shallows and weighted it down to keep it from floating away. Then we waded silently to the beach. Water cascaded from drenched clothing.

The shallows were dangerous. The bottom crawled with sea urchins, which amount to living pin cushions with waving masses of needle-sharp spines several inches long. If a man carrying heavy gear fell on one or, worse, into a bed of them, he could be seriously hurt. I put one boot carefully in front of the other to keep from getting stabbed in the ankle. Urchins crunched beneath my feet. I was extremely wet.

The team gathered on the beach and faded into the shadows. The

## VINES began to grab at us like cords in some weird trap.

**RIGHT:** On the beach, rehearsing for the night's ops. Note UDT life vests. **BELOW:** Recon with M16A1 waits in boat for mission. **BOTTOM:** Marine chewing tobacco before mission.



tide was high, which meant that we wouldn't leave many tracks in the sand. It's easy to feel conspicuous on a white beach in the starlight, with harbor lights pointing accusatory fingers across the water, but in fact we were almost undetectable. An enemy can fairly easily guard his airspace against paradrops by using radar, but it would cost billions to plant sensors along entire shorelines, which are long and dark. An alert sentry in exactly the right spot at the right time, perhaps with a Starlight scope, could have detected us. In the real world, sentries are spread thin and are usually bored.

My escort was Lt. Houston, who was along to grade the performance of the team. I couldn't have come along without him: Maj. Jon Smythe, CO of the company, had been helpful, but doesn't let reporters interfere with his training. Houston is 26, scuba-qualified, a HALO jumper with 400 jumps, a highly ranked competitive rifleman and serves as intelligence officer for Force Recon. He's average for the company. He took me down the beach a way so that we could talk.

"Well, I hope you like hard going," he said. "Gunny's probably going to head straight into the bush to get us off the beach — at least, that's what I'd do — and this stuff is pretty





thick. I've put four platoons through here this week, so I know more about this island than I really want to."

If I came back to the office without this story, they'd execute me in back of the building, so it didn't really make much difference what was in the bush.

"Is there anything you want me to do or not to do?"

This, I have learned, is a smart question. Troops often assume that you know as much as they do about what they are doing. Then you find yourself hanging in a tree asking, "You mean there was a *minefield* over there? No shit. . . ."

"Don't stay in one place too long," Houston said. We got bad ants in here. Don't grab anything you can't see, and you won't be able to see anything. Stay close to the man in front. It's awful easy to get lost. We've got all kinds of snakes and bees. Watch out for gullies. It's easy to break a leg. If you see big nests up in the trees, stay away from them. We think they're termites, but they may be hornets."

A happy thought: running through dense jungle in pitch darkness, with gullies everywhere and a cubic yard of hornets in hot pursuit. I decided to think about something else.

We moved in single file into the looming jungle, a deep black mass towering over us. Nobody said a word. Almost immediately I bumped into a tree. "Don't lead with your head," Houston whispered. I hadn't but, oddly enough, it is a natural instinct to do just that — push the brush away with your hands and stick your head through the opening. It is also a good way to get an eyeball full of thorns.

The growth closed behind us, muffling the rhythmic rush of waves on the beach. A smell of rotting vegetation pervaded the air. Overhead a few stars shone, startlingly bright to full night vision, but the forest stayed dark. Vines began to grab at us like cords in some weird trap. One caught at my throat. I slid my forearm along it to see which was the high end and ducked under it, found myself in a hole that might or might not drop 20 feet, twisted my way around a tree, felt a leafy branch grab at my face and cringed away from it. The tropics are full of what a soldier once described to me as "very effective ants" that crawl along a branch, run down your collar with single-minded determination and sting the living hell out of you. The only thing to do is to tear your clothes off.

*Continued on page 77*

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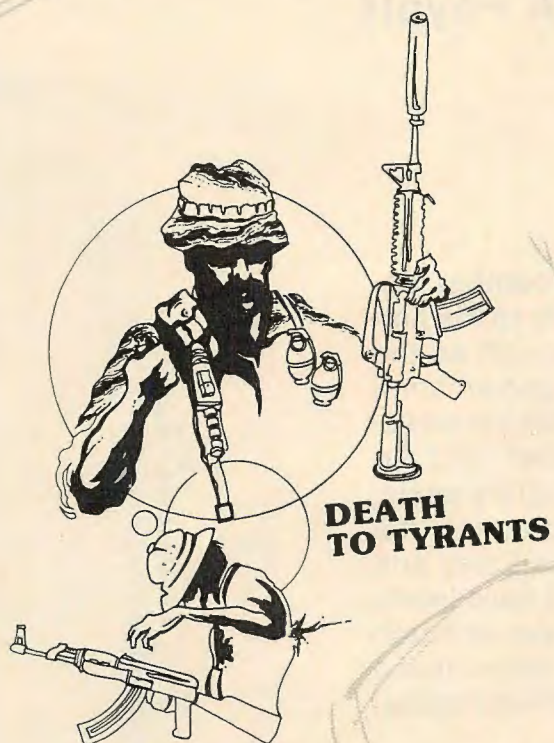
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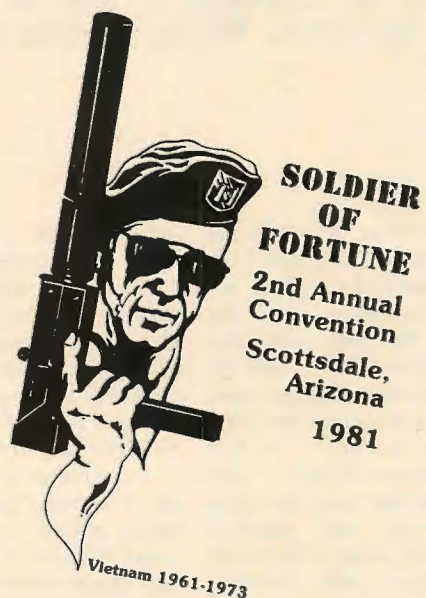
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**FRONT**



**IF IT DOES,  
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# MAKING WAR

## Part 2: There Has To Be A Payoff

by Marv Wolf

**L**EE Marvin's WWII experience as a combat Marine in the Pacific added authenticity to his performance in *The Big Red One* — although as the sergeant in the film he and his squad (shown here) stormed African and Italian beaches. Writer-director Sam Fuller, a WWII vet, remembered rigid Army policy and shot the film without military assistance — rather than possibly compromise his story. If he'd contacted Lt. Cols. Dennis Foley and Jim Channon, current Army PAOs, he'd have learned new Army policy is to give film makers as much information as possible — and let them make their own decisions. Photo: Lorimar Productions.

Last month Marv Wolf described the operation of the Marine Corps and U.S. Air Force West Coast public affairs offices. The primary concern of Maj. Pat Coulter, USMC, is that film companies do things "The Marine Way," and insofar as the situation permits, he provides realistic details to give added authenticity.

Some problems are insoluble — such as finding H-34s for *Rumor of War* — and then the technical adviser and film producers have to work with what is available: for example, using UH-1s and green Mexican pilots who couldn't duplicate Vietnam chopper-pilot maneuvers in the above film. "We just did the best we could," says Coulter.

Los Angeles is an important Air Force center for high-technology research and development and there are several large air bases in the area. Therefore, the USAF West Coast Public Affairs Office (PAO) is divided between providing information about area operations and advising motion-picture and TV production. Lt. Col. Duncan Wilmore, USAF, heads the movie and TV section.

Wilmore's primary mission is to preserve historical accuracy and maintain proper characterization of his service. The

original script of the TV movie, *Enola Gay*, for example, showed AF Gens. LeMay and Blanchard negatively — LeMay as obstructing Project "Silver Plate" and Blanchard, later AF vice chief-of-staff, as an idiot in a test maneuver — neither of which actually happened. When Wilmore pointed out these errors, the film makers changed the script.

All branches of the military are governed by the same Defense Department regulation: military support for a film cannot cause the service to incur any liability or cost the government any money, and the government may allow the use of equipment only when it is not competing with any civilian supplier. In addition, the military services will support only those productions which give, in their view, an accurate portrayal of military operations and historical incidents, persons or places.

**I**F the Marines and Air Force are interested in doing things by the numbers, the Army public-affairs officers have a more relaxed view of their mission. "We don't do much of anything that isn't connected with the film industry," explains Army Lt. Col. Dennis Foley.

"We're sort of the Department of the Army's film commission on the West



# MOVIES



## FORMER MARINE NOW MOVIE STAR

When Lee Marvin stars in a war movie, he doesn't have to imagine what the real thing is like. He learned the hard way, as a Marine rifleman during World War II.

Marvin joined the Marines in 1943 at age 17 and was soon dispatched to the Pacific where he took part in the Kwajalein/Eniwetok operations prior to hitting the beach at Saipan.

During that bloody campaign, Marvin's outfit fell into a Japanese ambush and a severe fire fight erupted. He suffered a gunshot wound in the back, the bullet nicking his spine.

For some time, other Marines were unable to reach him and, during the melee, another Marine fell dead on top of Marvin.

The actor-to-be spent the next 13 months hospitalized.

He said of the experience: "I spent most of 13 months lying on my back in a hospital thinking, and I concluded that it's every man for himself. You can't let your guard down for a minute. The most useless word in the world is 'help.'"

Marvin still receives a \$40-per-month disability pension.

After his discharge, he studied acting on the GI bill at the American Theater Wing in New York.

But before studying to be an actor, Marvin did something most uncharacteristic of him. He took a course in stenography.

"I still can't explain why I did that," he says.

Marvin has gained a reputation as something of a barroom brawler, and after one encounter he remarked: "He kept leaning on me and wouldn't back off, so I took away his banjo and hit him in the face with it."

Asked about his feelings regarding violence, Marvin said, "I killed during the war for impersonal reasons. I'm quite capable of doing it now for reasons of my own.

"Sure I would. But most people only wise up when they're down on the deck with blood everywhere."

Marvin was an unrepentant Hawk during the Vietnam War.

—Bob Poos



Photo: Warner Bros.

## JOHN WAYNE AT FT. BENNING

I was sitting in my windowless, air-conditioned cranny — I was too junior for a nook — on the top floor of Ft. Benning's Infantry Hall when I heard a clamor in the corridor. Doors opening. People talking in excited tones. I went to investigate and there was John Wayne.

He was working his way down the corridor, pausing every few feet to shake somebody's hand. A secretary asked him for an autograph. He obliged.

He was older than he looked on the screen, that day in 1967, had practically no hair and was 20 or maybe 25 pounds overweight.

He walked into my office, stuck his hand out and said, unnecessarily, "I'm John Wayne."

Wayne was at Benning to scout a location for his film, *The Green Berets*. I was a second lieutenant in the infantry, the assistant public-information officer for radio and TV. Within a few weeks he would be back, this time with a cast and crew, including his sons, Patrick and Michael, Aldo Ray and David Janssen.

By the time the film was over, Wayne had lost the extra poundage and produced a movie unremarkable save for its very existence: John Wayne was the only Hollywood film maker with the guts to make a pro-American motion picture about the Vietnam War while it was still in progress.

And while he was at it, I learned a little something about the art of making films.

Wayne chose Benning as the site for *The Green Berets* because it offered the necessary facilities and support. He was able to film live-fire sequences shot on ranges and conducted as part of training. He was able to ask for 50 female Oriental extras and get them from among military dependants. There were people at Benning who knew firsthand what a Vietnamese village looked like, and others who could tell him how to build a replica of a Special Forces A-Team camp.

The liaison officer was my boss, Capt. Augie Shomberger. Besides my other duties, I was Shomberger's gopher on the project. "Marv, I need 10 deuce-and-a-halves, 300 grunts with weapons and field gear and a couple of Chinooks for Tuesday morning," he'd tell me. Then I'd start making phone calls, rounding up the off-duty soldiers, the trucks, the 'hooks.

The most interesting thing I had to do was find a location for a scene that required an old French Colonial house. The location scouts had come up empty, but I knew that right across the street from my apartment in Columbus, Ga., was the remnant of an old plantation called Hilton. The house was large and looked like a French Colonial. It was surrounded by dense shrubbery and had two tennis courts. The owners were a pair of school teachers.

The production company rented their house, rebuilt the front porch to support its heavy equipment and turned my apartment into a command post for two days and three nights of shooting.

All of a sudden, my neighbors all needed to borrow a cup of something. The same neighbors — who barely nodded to me when I passed them in the hall or on the steps — all came over to say hello and be introduced to the movie people. It was funny. After the movie folks left, things went back to normal.

Once, David Janssen, who played a war correspondent in the film, asked me to come to his trailer out on a location set. There he asked me about some of the press I'd known in Vietnam — how they dressed in the field, how they conducted themselves, whether they were ever armed.

About the only others that ever went into that trailer were the makeup people and a stream of local girls, who seemed to stay for only an hour or two and then leave, quietly.

John Wayne strides through "A" Camp in Vietnam in "Green Berets." Weapon is M16. Photo: Warner Bros.

John Wayne liked the people he worked with at Benning so well that he had his writers create a bit part for the officer who ran the Ranger Department, Col. Edwards. He played himself, was on screen for about two minutes and was paid scale wages.

A few years ago I was in a camera store near my home in Southern California. John Wayne came in, looking gaunt and ill. As we waited at the film counter, he eyed me. Then he smiled and stuck out his hand. "You were with me at Benning for *The Green Berets*, weren't you?" he asked. We shook hands. "Nice to see you again," he said as he left the shop.

A couple of weeks later, he died of cancer. His films, including *The Green Berets*, live on. I'm pleased I can say I had a tiny part in bringing it to the screen.  
— Marv Wolf

## GOING TO WAR

There was one glaring technical error in *The Green Berets* that was probably caught only by Army veterans of Vietnam.

Near the movie's end, David Janssen, who plays the correspondent, is standing on the company street of what is supposedly an Army base in Vietnam.

A company of troops comes marching by, and one of the other principal players says, "If you want to go to the war, follow those guys. They're going to the war."

One problem was that the marching troops bore several different patches on their right shoulders, including First Cav and Big Red One. They were mostly Vietnam vets who only *now* could wear on their right shoulders patches of the units with which they had served in combat.

They weren't going to the war — they had returned from it.

—Bob Poos



Coast," agrees his working partner, Lt. Col. Jim Channon. "Just as any state would have a film commission to interface with and facilitate film making, that's our functional approach. Exactly how and why is an evolutionary thing. The office was originally established way back as a special operation to deal with public relations — with media requests. Who are you going to ask if you have an Army question? We have no troops here in L.A. So we opened this office."

"We've found that about eight queries come from the film or TV industry for every one that comes from other media. Our job is to help the American public understand the Army that belongs to and works for them," adds Channon.

### **"We help the public understand their Army."**

"Our approach to this is, if you just leave the motion-picture industry alone, they'll turn out about 700 hours of Army-related programming a year. If you just leave 'em alone. And that's Army past, present, future or notional." Notional? "Yes, notional. Somebody's idea of what the Army could be like. Take this script," says Foley, digging a loose-leaf-bound, soft-cover book out of a jammed bookcase (government issue, dark-brown wood, one each).

"This is about an organization called the U.S. Police Force. The film is called *Halloween in the Fog*, and it's set in the year 2000. The country has gone into complete chaos. Same thing is happening all over the world. Roaming bands of gypsies are looting and pillaging, and the government, in this film, finally gets the country under control by taking all the military and paramilitary forces and combining them into the U.S. Police Force, trying to settle things down, get the economy moving again and electing the president as a strong man with wide powers. They turn Manhattan into a penal colony and make Isaac Hayes the warden. Then somebody kidnaps the president.

"So, they're gonna make this with us or without us. We're giving them technical advice. They've got to use '60s helicopters, because there just isn't anything else available. With a fixed-wing aircraft you could maybe stick on some futuristic-looking fins or stuff, but not on helicopters. So the producer just has to live with that," says Foley.

Foley and his staff are also involved with *Pursuit*, a fact-and-fancy treatment of the D.B. Cooper skyjacking story. "Right up to the point where Cooper, played by Treat Williams, parachutes from the 727, it's all pretty close to the real story. Then an insurance investigator — played by Robert Duvall — gets into the story. He's a retired airborne/Ranger/Special-Forces type, and he begins to put together little things about D.B. Cooper and it turns out that Cooper was once his



Robert Duvall runs obstacle course in "Pursuit." Army PAOs helped film makers recreate Ft. Benning's Ranger School as it was in '60s — where film skyjacker learned escape-and-evasion skills. Photo: Polygram/Universal

student in Ranger School and later his platoon sergeant.

"So to film this we give them some photos and descriptions of the Victory Pond area at Ft. Benning, and they recreate the 1960s' Ranger School — a combined obstacle-and-confidence course out at Newhall [a Southern California movie location]. It's more than what we would have at Benning, but that's the way movies are — larger than life, statements made bold by exaggeration. It's show biz.

"Anyway, the producer, Buzz Kulik, called and asked us to help him make this authentic. The idea is to show how the D.B. Cooper character got all his escape-and-evasion skills and the manual dexterity to evade the law after the skyjack."

Jim Channon gets out of his chair and strolls into the office projection room, a large space crammed with videotape recorders, movie-projection equipment and many spools and cassettes. In a few minutes, an action sequence from *The Exterminator* flickers onto the video screen. Huge, slow-burning flares light a bizarre scene with waves of red light.

"They borrowed the lighting from *Apocalypse Now*," explains Channon. "These are the uncut opening scenes. The idea is to establish how this guy got to be such a killer, but the setting is weird. No one would light a holding camp for POWs that way unless they were inviting a B-52

strike. But Hollywood only knows what the picture before them knew. They copy costumes, special effects and so forth, because the producers feel that it's a good safe bet that if it sold last time, it'll sell this time.

"When one of these scripts comes into my office and I sit down to read it, I can tell the age of the writer by reading the script. Usually, if he's a good writer, he's an old writer. If he's an established writer and the studio says to him, 'Here's an idea, go ahead and write it,' it'll come in the door complete with corporals and bazookas and pineapple grenades.

"It's marvelously structured as a script, it does all the things you have to do, technically, but everybody is a corporal. And every general has nine aides, and all we do is sit around the officers' club trying to pull the wool over some congressman's eyes and get ourselves promoted. Where all this bullshit comes from, I don't know. But we have to dispel these stereotypes. So what we do," says Foley, "is offer as much information as we can.

"Then we allow them to make their own decision as to how they want to play it. It goes something like this: They'll say, 'We need this kind of helicopter for so-and-so, and then we want to go surfing on the beach.' And then we'll say, 'We don't do that, but it's your movie, and it's your nickel.' So at least they're able to make an

educated choice. So if they then go ahead and use the surfing scene anyway, I'm very much unmoved by the guy who calls me up and says, 'Hey, I saw them using the wrong helicopter.'

"What do they think this is, some kind of helicopter parking lot? This is L.A. The Army can't just trot out helicopters for the film industry when there are helicopters available from commercial sources. We're *not* concerned in this office with whether the badges or buttons are on right or wrong. When we are asked for assistance, there are only so many things we can help them with. Now if we help them with the badges at the expense of the characters, the story line or the really important, lasting things, then we've shot ourselves in the foot. The uniforms come from movie wardrobe-supply companies.

"When somebody writes to *Soldiers Magazine* and says, 'I saw this guy in the film and he was wearing the wrong color T-shirt,' it only means something to the guy who wore that color shirt. The millions and millions of other viewers only know whether they like the story or not. They know whether they like the character or not. The fact that it should have been a white T-shirt or a green T-shirt will be long lost or overlooked by them," says Foley.

But there are still some critics who would look past the forest and see only lots of little trees. "I got a call from a critic the other day," says Foley. "He said, 'Did you see *Private Benjamin*?' He was writing a review. I asked, 'Did you like it?' He said, 'That's not really important. I'm writing a review, and I'm itemizing the errors in it.' Who would want to read a review like that? What kind of person sits there counting the errors?"

***"This is the entertainment industry — they're not making documentaries."***

"We know there are errors. We have to allow them to go by the wayside. Do you know how much it would cost the production company if we got out on the set and said, 'During this period we didn't wear gold U.S. Army insignia and white name tapes,' when the costume company had already sent them out? They're not gonna shut down production while they send all the uniforms back and get new ones, because it's just too expensive. But somebody will sit in his living room wherever he's come to rest after leaving Fort Someplace and say, 'Those guys got the wrong name tapes on.' No shit.

"Well, if you're paying for it, pal, we'll have them put on the right name tapes. But as long as Universal is getting the bills, or Fox, or whoever, they're going to make it as accurate as they can afford. They're not making documentaries. Everybody who sees an Army movie makes the assumption that it has to be documentary in approach and that it has to





TOP: Lee Marvin's squad hits the beach during Allied invasion of Africa in "Big Red One." Weapons are M1s and 3.5-in. M20 rocket launcher. Photo: Lorimar Productions. LEFT: "Titanic" was creation of Hollywood special-effects lab, which filmed its ascent from ocean floor. In movie, scene in which sailors aboard "U.S.S. Denver" mimed surprise and awe was spliced to shot of liner breaking surface. Photo: AFD.

have documentary authenticity. This is the ENTERTAINMENT industry," he says, emphasizing each syllable. "They don't do documentaries."

"Dennis has lots of time in the service," says Channon. "I have lots of time with troops. Our leading priority is to tell the story of the soldier in the modern Army. If there's ever a forgotten man, it's the everyday soldier who's out there trying to do his job. We know that's not a very good subject for entertainment by Hollywood standards. Unless Hollywood can find some little flaw in what's going on, so they can kick a little drama or a little comedy into it, they're not interested. That's what comes across in M\*A\*S\*H.

"We have to accept the fact that, for the most part, the Army is going to be treated as comedy. So we have to find a way, working with the screenplay, to show the common soldier doing his job. We're much more concerned with *who* the character is than if he's in the right uniform. If we have time for that, fine, but it's further down the list of priorities."

Foley has been involved with M\*A\*S\*H since he arrived, nearly three years ago, to take on his present job. "I'm proud every week to be in some way involved with the program. People sit in their living rooms and they know whether they like Sherman Potter [the colonel played by Harry Morgan], Hawkeye [played by Alan Alda], Radar, Klinger and B.J.

"Uniforms change all the time, but a question that stays the same is: 'Do you like the show; are you entertained by it?' So when the staff at M\*A\*S\*H calls us and asks for help, we very enthusiastically try to do whatever we can. We know it's a comedy. We don't sit here and wring our hands and say, 'We don't want to help you make somebody look foolish.' We have fools, we have clowns and we have buffoons in the Army, just as in every other segment of society," say Foley.

"But you notice," puts in Channon, "that when the helicopters come in with wounded, nothing gets in the way. The bottom line is, they care about their pro-

fession, and they care about each other."

"Hawkeye," adds Foley, "doesn't like bullshit, chickenshit paperwork and bureaucracy. What does he like? To provide the best medical attention he can to his patients. Now, what's wrong with helping to present that?"

M\*A\*S\*H is now in its eighth year on TV. But the production almost closed down a couple of years ago for want of fresh material. "About the time that Jim and I came to work here, nearly three years ago, we had a sort of change in attitude around here. It was the doing of our old boss, [Lt. Col.] Pat Vittella, who retired not long ago. The new way of doing things is, we don't 'not help' anybody. We help 'em all.

"Because the more help and information you can give to people creating entertainment, the better it is for us. Because they can make better decisions based on reality rather than just assumptions about the way things are in the Army. And they also get to like the people with whom they come into contact. We find that they come away with a completely different perspective on the Army — a big change from what they thought the Army was like before, as they sat in Studio City, writing their screenplays.

"We helped the M\*A\*S\*H people for two years with ongoing, previously designed episodes. We knew how well they were doing — it might just be coincidence, but since we started working closely with them, their show's ratings have gone up from being in the top 50 or 60 to consistently being in the top 10 — and we were just tickled to be associated with that kind of success. But they called us and said, 'Well, this looks like the end of it; we're just about out of story ideas.'

"We said, 'What?' and they said, 'After seven years we're dry. This looks like our last season. What more can we do with Korea?'

"And we said, 'Can we offer a suggestion? There isn't a real difference between Army field hospitals in Korea and Army field hospitals in Vietnam, or those of World War II. They're all the *same* stories. They have the same components — doctors and nurses who are not very military-oriented by nature; enlisted men around the hospitals who are caught up in all the confusion; patients who are confused, nervous and scared. It doesn't make any difference which war.

"If you'd like, we'd be glad to pool our knowledge about field hospitals. We have over a hundred years of military experience right here in the office through multiple tours in Vietnam.' They hired two supplementary writers to come up with story ideas for their eighth year. A kid came over and sat down with us and we spent about three hours, telling him stories that had happened to us while we were in Army hospitals in Vietnam.

"They called us back a couple of days later and said, 'Guys, thanks a lot, we now have next year.' And from that they



Pvt. Benjamin (Goldie Hawn) infiltrates "enemy" camp. PAOs realize Hollywood sees Army as comedy — but ensure accuracy as well as laughter in films about today's Army. Photo: Warner Bros.

already know that. So there's the seed of a story, and they went with it."

Sometimes Channon and Foley get involved with a film idea when it's still just a gleam in a writer's eye, and here, they feel, is where they have the opportunity to help the most. "People come into this office with the assignment to do some research and, eventually, write a screenplay. What they have might be just two sentences on a piece of paper — literally. Two people walked in here two years ago — wonderful writers — Nancy Meyers and Charles Shyer, and said, 'We want to do a movie about a woman who joins the Army.'

"I asked, 'Have either of you ever been in the Army?' No. Well, they knew it was going to be a lot of work. For one year they wrote. And every 10 or 12 days they called me and asked, 'Can this girl do so-and-so after she gets out of basic training?' And I helped them, answering these kinds of questions.

"It started from nothing, and now it's making them a bundle of money — the film is called *Private Benjamin*, with Goldie Hawn. They were so pleased with the help they got from the Army — and it's reflected in the film. When you see the movie, all those kids in it are sharp, they're aggressive, they're enthusiastic, they're bright-eyed. You don't find a bunch of old stereotypes.

"And yet, if you leave the industry alone, they'll make all the colonels in their late 60s. All the lieutenants are in their 40s. All the sergeants are 55 pounds overweight and they're conniving to pull the wool over the officers' eyes. But if you tell them the way it really is and say, 'Look, pick and choose what you need' — because they're going to do the film anyway, whether we help out or not — you'll find a really good relationship can evolve."

"In *Benjamin*, all the colonels were silly, but they *looked* great," adds Channon. "And all the soldiers were in brand-new uniforms. They paid a lot for the scenes to look right. And all the background in the film, something the writers aren't usually concerned with, looked

Lt. Col. Dennis Foley (right) discusses Ranger training with Robert Duvall during filming of "Pursuit." Army PAO's technical advice helped film realism. Photo: Polygram/Universal

great. That is a lot of free advertising for the taxpayer that didn't cost Uncle Sam a nickel."

On the floor above the Army's 10th-story office is the suite occupied by the Navy, which has by most standards been the most successful in recent years in achieving the sort of film image it desires. One of the men responsible for this is Capt. Bill Graves, who retired in 1980 and is now with Paramount Studios.

His successor is Capt. Dale Patterson, a career public-affairs officer. "The Navy has been highly selective about choosing which projects to support," he says. "We exercise the rules pretty responsibly and, as a result, what you see on the screen makes the Navy look pretty good. Every time we get a script we have to decide if there is a payoff for us in this. There has to be a payoff.

"Does [the script] portray the Navy in an authentic light? Now, I mean that from both sides, but my concern is not that they're going to glamorize us. That doesn't happen. You see, most of the scripts we see come from people who really don't have any idea about the Navy, but *think* they do. They have stereotypical ideas about the way we are, partly because they've had a little bit of experience, way back, with the Navy.

"The real professionals come in and say to us, 'I don't know much about the Navy, but I've got this idea in my head about a story. Let me write it out and bring it by for you to tell me how to make

came up with 21 story ideas. They had some outside input, too. So they went ahead with plans for the next season. We still get calls from writers who work for them but don't know where a particular story idea came from, and since we're the only continuity the writing side has (except for the producer), they ask *us* about things that happened three or four seasons ago. For instance, the writers need to know that Maj. Houlihan was married to Donald Penobscot, but that now they're divorced — or particular stories might not make sense to all the loyal viewers," says Foley. "So we end up fleshing out story ideas that began right here in our bull session."

"I'll give you another example," chimes in Jim Channon. "Last week a writer from M\*A\*S\*H called and asked if we had chemical-warfare companies in Korea. I told him we used chemicals in Korea, but they were mostly smokepot platoons which protected and screened friendly forces. See, they were writing a script in which they had Alan Alda coming into contact with one of his former school teachers.

"We said, 'Fine, make him a former chemistry professor called up to command a smoke-generator company. Have him succumb to some kind of chemical, and have him brought to the hospital unconscious, but with the gas mask still strapped to his body. Have Alan Alda pained because it *seems* his former friend has been gassing the enemy. But then have the whole situation turn around when the lab report comes back and the guy comes to and they find out it's just regular old smoke, used to protect the friendlies. 'Cause Alan likes to play the heavy, we



it authentic, to put the Navy flavor into it.' And these scripts usually make the best movies."

Patterson got his start in the movie business as an ensign. He was serving aboard a carrier based in San Diego as the ship's communications and public information officer, when he got sick and was sent to the base hospital. After recovering, he was waiting for new orders and temporarily assigned to the headquarters. He found himself detailed to the public information office, which was getting all kinds of flak from a movie company shooting *Some Like It Hot* [Marilyn Monroe, Jack Lemmon, Tony Curtis].

"The newspapers and the radio were printing all sorts of things — bad things — about the Navy. So the admiral sent me over to the old Hotel Coronado, where Billy Wilder was producing the film, to find out what the hell the problem was.

"I went over there in my white uniform and, as soon as I showed up, Billy Wilder grabbed me and said, 'Goddam it, young man, you gotta do something about this.' 'What's the problem?' I asked. 'You have got to keep them goddamn airplanes from flying through this area. Every time I get a good scene your damned Navy blows it. You gotta move those ships out there.'

"He was ranting and raving, with close to 300 people listening. I was just an ensign. I told him, 'I don't know what I can do,' but I went back and talked to the admiral.

"He said, 'We ought to be able to ac-

commodate him somehow. We can't stop flying airplanes, but go see the operations officer and tell him I've got you on this special assignment, and see what he can do.'

"He said, 'Well, we can change our flight times, but this squadron is getting ready to deploy to the Western Pacific, and they've got to get in their hours. You go back and talk to Mr. Wilder and find out what hours he wants to shoot, and we'll try and work around that.' And he told me the ships were all merchant ships, and they didn't belong to us.

"So I told all this to Wilder, and he got someone in the port to help out with the ships. But Wilder's biggest problem was Marilyn Monroe. She was hours late every time when she was supposed to be on the set. It was a rough time in her life, I guess. But she'd be three hours late showing up, and that would delay shooting and then the planes would start flying — jeez, what a mess. But I realized from that day forward that working with motion-picture companies was not the glamorous assignment everyone thinks it is."

Many films cannot be made unless they receive Navy support; there is nowhere to rent, for example, a nuclear submarine or a couple of aircraft carriers. But the Navy won't send ships to sea for days at a time *just* to make a movie — they will, instead, try to get the producers to schedule their filming around the ships' schedules.

Because the number of days a ship can be under way is strictly accounted for, when a producer cannot meet the regular schedule and requests a different time, then the Navy may charge him for the operating costs.

"We sent Marble Arch Productions a bill for \$600,000 for its *Raise the Titanic*," explains Pat-

erson. "One day we used an LST [Landing Ship, Tank] and LPD [Landing Platform Dock — an amphibious-assault ship] and a DD [Destroyer]. We also had a nuclear submarine come by, on its way to a patrol station, and we didn't charge them for that. But everyone also got good training out of it, a bonus for the ships and crews involved."

As far as shipboard scenes go, ordinary sailors are often called upon to be extras. "In *Raise the Titanic*, there was a scene in which the director wanted to film the reactions of sailors aboard the *Denver*. Well, we didn't actually have the *Titanic* available — they had to do that with special effects back in the studio — but we needed to have a bunch of sailors going



Jason Robards plays retired admiral in charge of government project to raise *Titanic*.  
Photo: AFD

around saying exclamatory things with expressions of wonder on their faces. So we used the actual crew. Afterward, the film company made a contribution to the ship's welfare-and-recreation fund, which is what they usually do in that case," says Patterson.

War movies are made by an industry that, in the end, is not unlike any other industry — a bunch of companies out to make a profit. Sometimes they do, sometimes they don't. But their jobs would be much tougher without the support of military public affairs officers like Pat Coulter, Jim Channon, Dennis Foley, Dunc Wilmore and Dale Patterson.

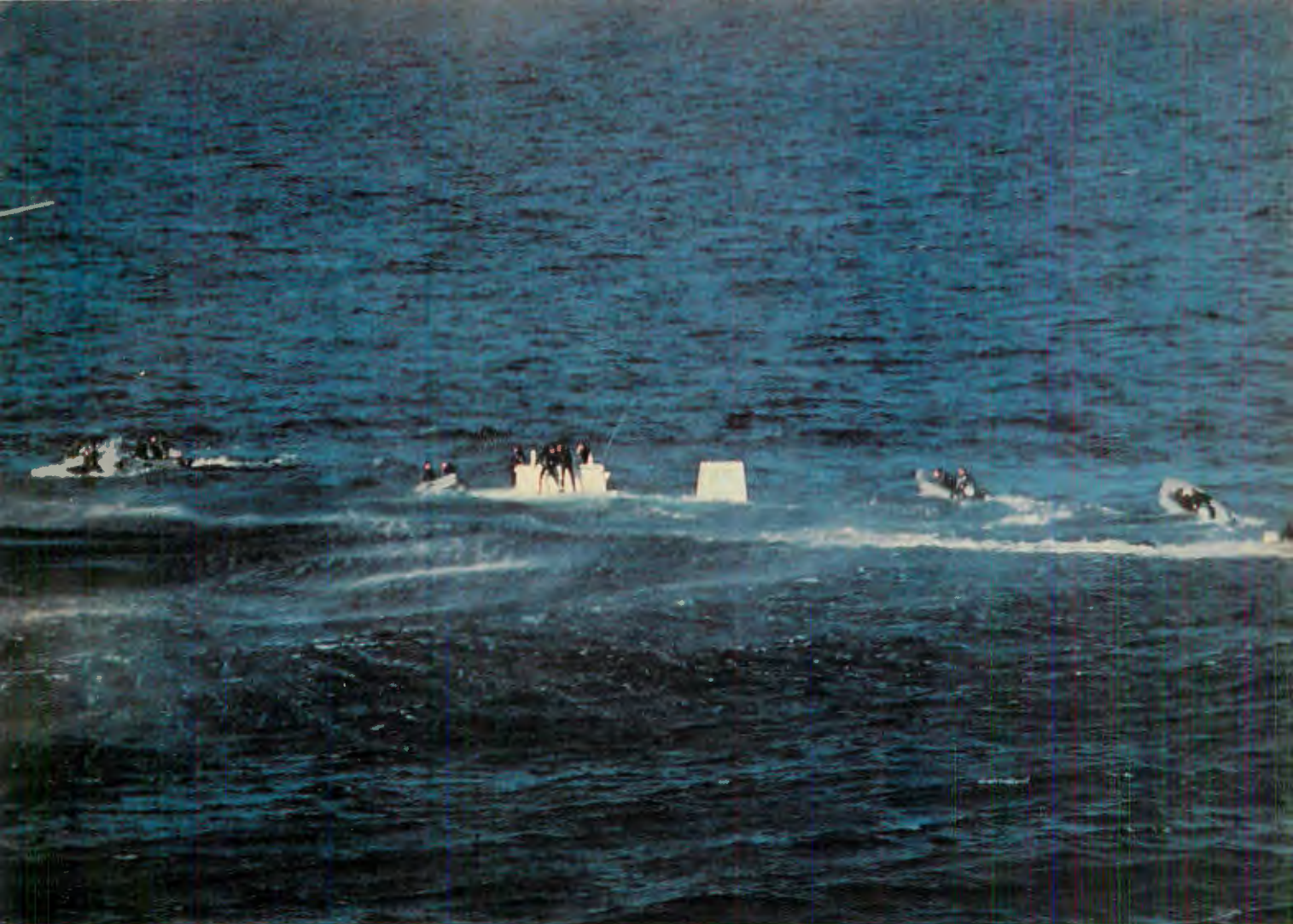
"Hollywood is a place where there's an inner circle, and thousands of people are trying to get into it. In that inner circle, everybody treats everybody else just like family," explains Dennis Foley. "It hasn't always been like this, but right now they treat all of us as members of that inner circle. We're part of the family, and it's because we make it our business to be as helpful as we can."







**TOP:** Martin Sheen and "U.S.S. Nimitz" star in "Final Countdown." Navy — realizing film makers can't rent aircraft carriers or nuclear subs — works with producers to schedule filming for dates when ships are on sea maneuvers. Photo: United Artists. **ABOVE:** M\*A\*S\*H cast preps for surgery. Army PAOs saved popular TV series a few seasons back with new story ideas — now script writers come to them for background info. Photo: 20th Century-Fox



TOP: Coast Guard chopper hovers over nuclear sub on location for "Raise the Titanic." Sub was on maneuvers but Navy billed film makers for operating costs of LST, LPD and destroyer used in film. Photo: AFD. ABOVE LEFT: Klinger gets lit in Korea. M\*A\*S\*H is one of best examples of cooperation between Army PAO and film industry. Photo: 20th Century-Fox. ABOVE RIGHT: Lt. Col. Dennis Foley checks Vietnam War script for accuracy. "Movies are entertainment, not documentaries," he says. "What we're concerned with is showing the common soldier doing his job." Photo: Lt. Col. Jim Channon



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## BULLETIN BOARD

by Bob Poos

Continued from page 6

Reunion at the Caribbean Gulf Hotel in Clearwater, Fla., September 18-20. Further information may be obtained by writing or calling reunion chairman William C. Wilkinson, 7951 Harwood Rd., Largo, FL 33543; (813) 392-0477.

Men who served on the *USS McNair*, DD 679, from 1951-1955, plan to hold a reunion in July at Indianapolis, Ind. Contact is Gene Mulbarger, 8118 Cheswick Dr., Indianapolis, IN 46219, (317) 898-0316.

## BUSHMASTER MANUFACTURER ...

Readers have inquired about where information on the Bushmaster pistol is available, including the full-automatic version. It is available from: Bushmaster Firearms, 309 Cumberland Ave., Portland, ME 04101. Or call (207) 775-3324.

## ENLISTED CUNNING ...

One of SOF's tireless researchers came across this gem the other day which ex-Sgt. Bob Poos, ex-Sgt. Craig Nunn, ex-Cpl. Jim Graves and ex-Lance Cpl. Fred Reed think is too good not to pass along to our readers. "Enlisted men are stupid but extremely cunning and sly and bear considerable watching." *Army Officers Guide, 1894.*

Col. Robert K. Brown is not commenting.

## NICARAGUAN EXILES ...

*Soldier of Fortune* magazine has learned that some Nicaraguan exiles in Honduras are still active against the communist-backed Sandinista Nicaraguan government.

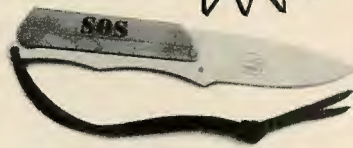
The exiles, living in refugee camps along the Honduran-Nicaraguan border, are now short of everything, due to the fact that their funds have been expended in conducting cross-border operations or in arming themselves for defense of their camps. Their most pressing needs are food and clothing; due to the nature of the area they are living in and the activity going on around them, their clothing needs are for serviceable fatigues and boots.

If you have any old fatigues or boots that you either can't wear or don't want, send them to SOF and we will see that they are sent to the exiles. Send them to: SOF, Nicaraguan Freedom Fighters' Relief, P.O. Box 693, Boulder, CO 80306.

## MERCYS FOR FREEDOM ...

At least three mercenaries, two British and one American, have ap-

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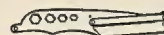
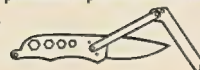


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peared in Pakistan where they hoped to offer their services to Afghanistan's freedom fighters.

They were identified in British press reports as John Pilgrin, a former British paratrooper; Robin Morrison, an Englishman who says he spent nine years in the French Foreign Legion, including the Legion's paratroop on Kolwezi, Zaire, in 1978; and Eugene T. Shipley, an American Vietnam vet.

Pilgrin said he served with Mike Hoare in the Congo and was a Selous Scout in Rhodesia.

"We killed Cubans and East Germans in Africa," said Pilgrin. "Now we want to kill a few Russians." He added, "We've got 72 men standing by back home to come here and fight. All we need is the go-ahead from the Afghans."

Pilgrin also said he has a source in San Diego, Calif., for hand-held surface-to-air missiles that could be employed against Soviet helicopters.

Shipley was not as talkative as his British companions. During questions by a brilliant, if persistent Reuters correspondent, Shipley punched the English newsman and knocked him from a chair.

As the *London Mirror* correspondent then put it: "Further questions were thought unwise."

## IT'S A GAS...

The Army has decided to proceed with issuing its newly developed gas masks to troops, although it is not entirely satisfied with the masks.

The new masks reportedly fit 95 percent of male troops snugly and safely, but are not suitable for the smaller faces of most female soldiers.

Another problem is that the lenses are not flexible enough to fit against the sights of an M16 rifle or those of smaller antitank weapons such as TOWs.

The Army figures, however, that the new masks are a vast improvement over the old ones.

## ELITE RESEARCH PROJECT...

Reader Don LaCoss of 1410 Durham Rd., Wallingford, CT 06492, is doing an in-depth research paper on elite military units of the world, their histories and a comparison to conventional units in the same armies. He would appreciate hearing from

Continued on page 90

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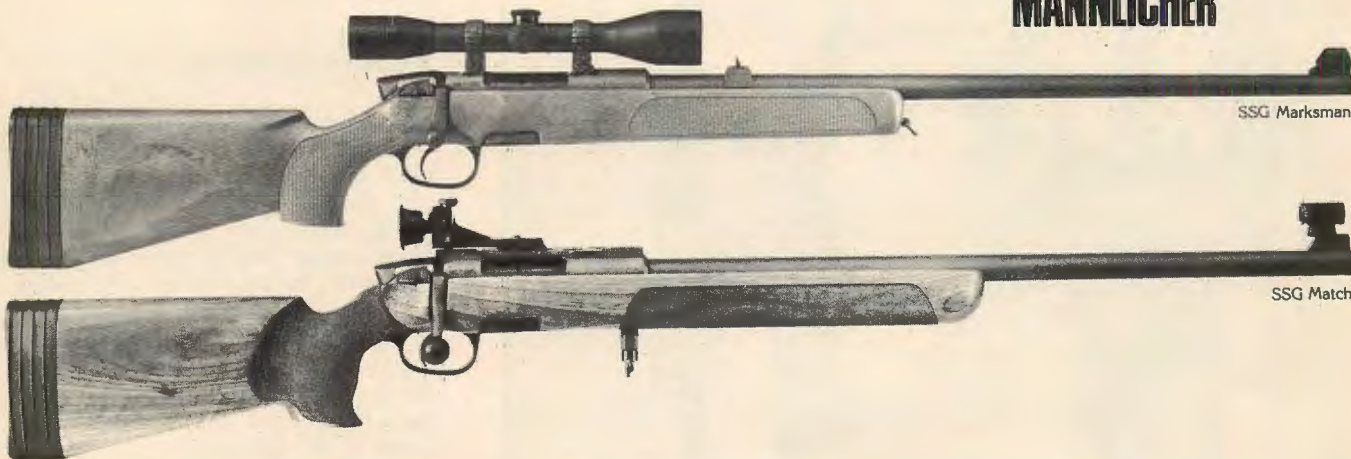
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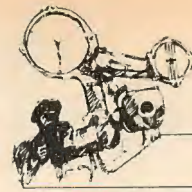


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**FLAK**

Continued from page 8

against growing numbers of Vietnamese fishermen. At the time no violence had been reported, but a Klan official stated it might become necessary to enforce fishing laws their own way.

In response to Mr. Castillo's question — no, SOF does not support the Ku Klux Klan nor any other hate group that tries to impose its will through force or threats. — The Eds.

## REAR GUARD REPORT ...

Sirs:

I enjoyed Herb Friedman's article, "Sex and Psywar" (SOF, May '81), very much since I had some personal contact with this as an intelligence officer during WWII. We were sent on a sort of "rear-guard action," for my group went to an area in the Pacific Theater to determine the cause of some rather strange injuries to the posteriors of our fighting men. I quickly ruled out self-inflicted wounds, but the pattern was baffling: men were being hospitalized with burns on their rumps — the right rump.

We noticed a brisk trade in Japanese porn cards which were dropped both from planes and by shells. They seemed to go in a series, starting out mildly and working up to hardcore. Purely in the line of duty, of course, two in our group (me included) began to assemble a set. When we finally succeeded, we noticed that the last two were thicker because of a layer of chemicals laminated between the last two pictures of the "set" which, when placed together and kept warm, would burst into flame from just a little friction (such as sitting on them). Why just the right side? Well, then as now, we liked to carry our wallets on the left side.

If there is a moral to this story, I guess it is that the saying, "Military Intelligence is a contradiction in terms," can be wrong — thanks to MI, there are fewer half-assed soldiers in the world.

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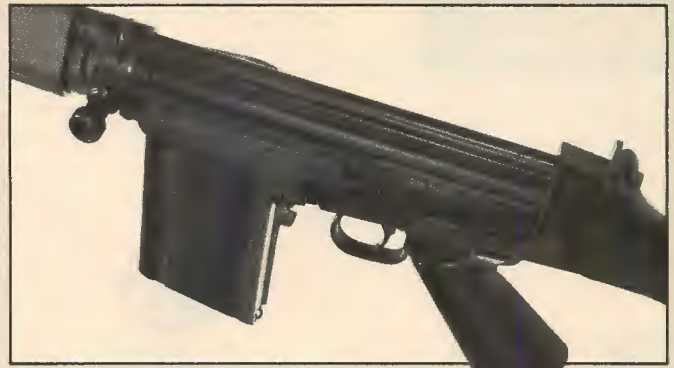
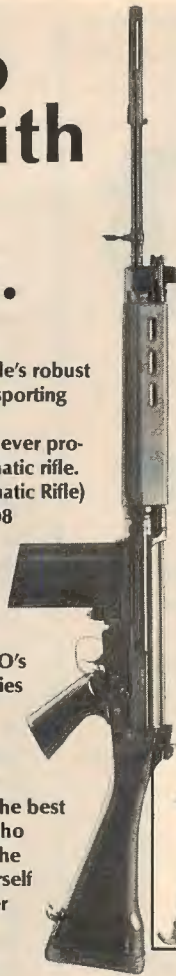
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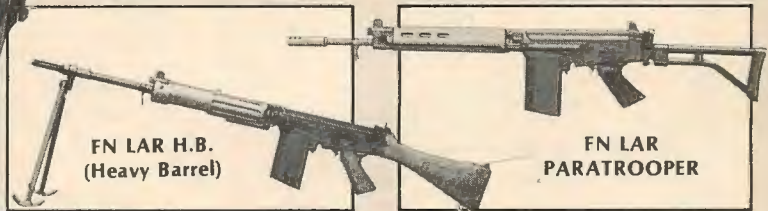
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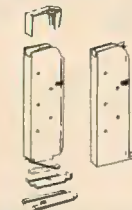
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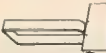
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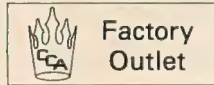
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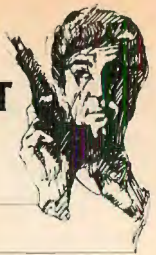
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# COMBAT PISTOLCRAFT



Ken Hackathorn

Continued from page 10

this modification, file or grind away metal at the edges of the magazine well in the pistol butt to provide a funnel for the magazine to slip into quickly. Various pistolsmiths use slightly different angles and contours for this beveling operation.

**A** second key to getting a smooth, fast speedload comes from the way you grasp and start the spare magazine into the pistol. Grip the spare magazine so that your index finger is placed at the front edge of the magazine and nearly touches the bullet. This is the easiest way to place the magazine into the magazine well with perfect index.

Many practical shooters add bumper pads to their magazines to help the seating operation of the magazine into the weapon. If the magazine is not seated fully and latched into the weapon, it will result in failure to chamber the second round. For this reason, magazine pads are all the rage these days. Most leather manufacturers provide pre-cut leather pads for the Colt magazine. Also, plastic or rubber pads are popular for the same purpose. They can be epoxy- or Super-Glue-attached in minutes.

Bill Wilson, Dept. SOF, Route 3, Box 211-D, Berryville, AR 72616, is offering a new accessory for use with the Colt 1911 style of pistol that makes speed-loading simple even for a novice. Manufactured by Rogers Holsters of Jacksonville, Fla., this new device is called the "E-Z Loader." It is a small plastic attachment that fits under the pistol's stock panels. When attached, the E-Z Loader adds a funnel-like surface to the bottom of the pistol butt. This enables you to find the magazine well in a speed event or in the dark.

For those who prefer not to file away at their favorite blaster, but still want the means to make fast magazine changes, this attachment from Wilson's Gunshop should be ideal. The top practical pistolmen are using them, and I have a couple on my own pistols. I think they are worth the effort. Price is \$9.95 from Wilson -- and a couple of his glue-on magazine pads should also be used to aid in the seating operation. Some wood stocks may require minor wood removal to allow proper fit with the E-Z Loader. Pachmayr stocks give a perfect fit, due to the slightly softer surface of the rubber stocks.

Any individual who cannot modify his pistol, due to policy or regulation, will

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find this add-on beveled magazine-well device to be the answer — and at a reasonable cost. The piece is very low-profile and barely noticeable.

MANY users of the Colt Government Model pistol find the now-standard-issue short trigger less than ideal. If you have large hands, these short triggers can be a problem. I like the longer 1911 pattern trigger for my personal use. The best of the lot in this style were the old GI National Match triggers fitted to the NM hardball guns. Made of aluminum, they had an over-travel stop built in. The originals have pretty much disappeared. Parts dealers offer a number of copies, but few of them come close to the quality of the original.

I recently came across a new version of the old standby that is just as good as the original — and in some ways is better finished. Janos Videki, Videki's Gun Shop, Dept. SOF, Rt. No. 1, Box 715, Stedman, NC 28391, is making super-quality long and short aluminum triggers. They are the best I have seen, and I recommend them highly. Bill Hardin, Natchez Shooters Supplies, Dept. SOF, P.O. Box 17591, Nashville, TN 37217, has the Videki triggers in stock. Price is \$12.50 each. This firm also handles a complete line of parts and accessories for the practical shooter.



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## DELTA

Continued from page 25

It was getting dark when the gunships set up an orbit and two Dustoffs came in for the dead and wounded. Doc Taylor stood in the fading light, supervising loading, the prop-blast whipping his sandy hair. I squeezed in beside the left-door gunner. Merriman and Thompson were on the same ship. The passenger space was a mound of men — alive and dead — blood, bandages and litter poles.

Ken Nauman came up grinning and gave me the thumbs-up sign.

"Hey, Ken," I called. "When you bringing the battalion back in here?"

"Oh, next week I guess." He waved us into the air.

At dusk, the mountains were beautiful, but it was cold in the chopper and wind from the open doors clawed at our clothes. I held my aching arm and wondered if Nauman could hold all night.

Ten minutes after we lifted off, a ragged armada of Army and Marine helicopters came by, flung across the fading blue-gray sky. They flew hell-for-leather toward our LZ. Allen must have scraped and begged all over I Corps for them, but they were going to get everybody out that night.

God, they were beautiful!  
(To be concluded.)



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**ANGOLA**

*Continued from page 39*

has since left his Kinshasa headquarters under pressure from President Mobutu (who has been mending his political fences with the Luanda regime) for exile in France. His movement seems to have collapsed, although a few isolated bands of FNLA guerrillas continue to operate in the north.

With Roberto out of the picture, the U.S. barred by law from helping UNITA, and the South Africans disillusioned by the West's reaction to their intervention and obsessed by the larger stakes of the conflict in Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), Savimbi was left alone to face the full fury of the communist world.

And the Soviet Union's intervention made the U.S. contribution to the anti-government forces, cancelled by the Congress, look both paltry and timid. On 8 October 1976, Neto signed a 20-year treaty of friendship and cooperation with the Soviet Union, the first with any sub-Saharan nation. By the end of 1977, East-bloc governments provided Angola with arms and equipment worth \$495 million, including such big-ticket items as 24 MiG-21s and 60 T-54 tanks.

After Savimbi's capital of Huambo (formerly Nova Lisboa) fell to the Cubans in February of 1976, he might have been forgiven had he cut a deal with Neto or, like Roberto, gone into a comfortable foreign exile.

Savimbi did neither. He pulled his forces back into the bush and regrouped, leaving the towns to the Cubans. He vowed to fight on, accepting help from all who would give it, alone if necessary. And he has made good on that promise.

### **Economy A Mess**

Independence proved to be no rose garden for Neto. Although oil production from the Cuban-guarded Cabinda fields operated by Gulf Oil are back to a pre-independence level of 180,000 barrels a day, the rest of Angola's economy is a mess.

Angola, once the world's fourth-largest coffee producer, has seen production of the bean fall by 80 percent from the 1974 figure of 180,000 tons worth \$154 million. Most of the coffee plantations simply were abandoned by their Portuguese owners and their Ovimbundu laborers, who returned to the UNITA area in the south.

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came to a halt. Angola, once self-sufficient in food, had to import half its requirements by 1978.

Aware of the desperate state of the Angolan economy, and weary of a war that was absorbing 60 percent of his country's budget, Neto began to make modestly pro-Western noises in 1979, and responded positively to a proposition by President Leopold Senghor of Senegal that he broker negotiations between Neto and Savimbi.

But in September of 1979, Neto fell ill and flew suddenly to Moscow, where he died of "complications" after an operation for cancer of the pancreas. Savimbi believes Neto was "surgically murdered" by the Russians for his drift toward the West and gives three reasons for thinking so:

Neto designated no successor before flying to Moscow, he was not accompanied by his Portuguese wife and his personal physician was not allowed to attend the operation or the post-mortem. Such evidence is no more than circumstantial, but it's an interesting theory.

Neto was succeeded by Jose Eduardo dos Santos, his planning minister. Dos Santos, another mulatto, was educated at Baku in the Soviet Union, where he became a political organizer among Third-World students. He was selected for special military training by KGB talent scouts and, after university, took a course in military telecommunications. He is married to a Russian woman. Such unions, far from being made in heaven, are not sanctioned by the Soviet authorities unless the blushing bride is considered "safe" — or more than that.

Far from reducing his unpopular dependence on Moscow, Havana and East Berlin, dos Santos had requested and received additional Russian, Cuban and East German help.

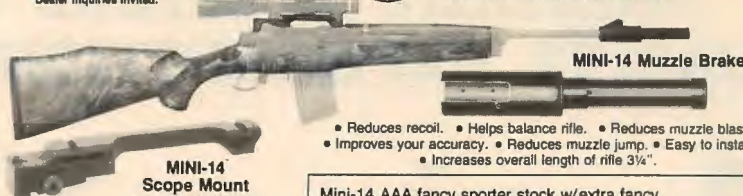
Cubans control the Angolan departments of foreign trade, transport, health and public works, indoctrinate trade-union leaders and provide 1,500 teachers (four secondary schools in Cuba have been set aside for the training of the 6,000 students from Angola and Mozambique who, if the Russians have their way, will be the next generation of leaders in Portuguese-speaking Africa). The East Germans run the railways and the secret police and train SWAPO guerrillas for action in South West Africa. The Soviets, in addition to exercising direct command over all Angolan air and naval forces, run the fishing industry and provide advisers for the Foreign Ministry.

Savimbi thinks it unlikely he can reach a negotiated settlement with dos Santos unless the West shows it is serious about supporting the drive for freedom in Angola.

"Dos Santos," he says, "is too weak within the MPLA and hence too

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dependent on the Russians to open negotiations with me; his enemies, helped by the Kremlin, would simply get rid of him."

So the prospect is for a protracted struggle in Angola, the outcome of which will depend largely on events beyond the control of either dos Santos or Savimbi.

I caught up with Jonas Savimbi after a spine-jolting three-day truck ride through the rough tsetse-fly country north of Caprivi Strip (see "Bushmen: the Montagnards of South Africa," SOF May '80). The UNITA leader was visiting a camp north of the Cuito River where 650 recruits were about to complete a five-month basic training course.

Savimbi was dressed like the soldier he is: camouflage trousers tucked into combat boots, short-sleeved khaki shirt adorned with green epaulets bearing the three stars of a lieutenant general and green beret. On his left hip, the grip reversed, was a Smith & Wesson .38 revolver; to his right thigh was strapped a U.S. Ranger knife.

Under a white-hot September sky, Savimbi strode up and down the dusty parade ground exhorting his troops, stabbing at the sun for emphasis with his silver-tipped walking stick, speaking alternately in Portuguese (the language of command for UNITA as for the MPLA) and Ovimbundu.

He derided Neto: "A black white man who can speak no African language, who sleeps with a Russian wife and has sold his country to the communists." He promised his men no easy way. Some of them, he admitted, would die. But they "would make many Cuban widows, and cause the mothers of Russia to weep." He vowed that not an ounce of copper would pass down the Benguela Railroad to the sea while the Cubans remained in Angola. And in the end, he promised, Angola would be free. Savimbi's troops cheered him, paraded before the thatched reviewing stand and marched off singing to one of their final training exercises.

Later we talked for an hour and a half, after a banquet of fried eggs and corned-beef hash washed down with a liberated bottle of Portuguese beer.

Savimbi characterized the Carter administration's African policy, "with the single exception of the settlement in Zimbabwe," as a "disaster." The policy of "appeasing the communists, which has failed and will continue to fail, must be changed," he insisted.

Savimbi maintained that his struggle was not against the Angolan people — and hence was not a civil war — but "against the Russian, East German and Cuban colonizers." He asserted that freedom was indivisible and that his fight was really the West's battle, even though "it is the Angolans who are doing the fighting and the dying."



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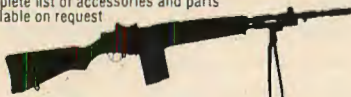
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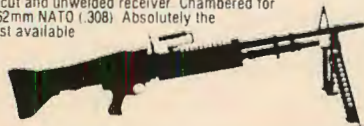
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In a further reference to U.S. policy, Savimbi said, "Nobody wants war, but if you are to have peace, you must be strong. Weakness invites war."

"Cuba," he insisted, "must be cut down to size: It is a small island in the Caribbean, yet it makes trouble for a great power like America, not only here but in your own backyard."

Savimbi admitted he could not hope to carry the war to the Russians, East Germans and Cubans in the Angolan population centers unless and until he could obtain better ground-to-air missiles and anti-tank weapons.

"Until that happens," he continued, "my strategy is to extend guerrilla operations to all areas of Angola, tying down the 50,000 men of the Angolan army, forcing them to conscript more young men, which in turn will further disrupt the economy and create contradictions within the regime. If I cannot defeat them militarily, I will make it impossible for the MPLA to rule, and thus force them to negotiate."

Savimbi made no appraisal of the Russians as fighting men, "because we see so little of them." But as military planners and strategists, he said he found them "rigid and slow to react to Angolan realities." The East Germans, he said, were very "methodical and well-disciplined, but lack flair." He said he was not particularly impressed with the Cubans: "Without tanks, helicopters and Stalin Organs, they are not supermen." As for the Angolan soldiery, he said, "you have seen what they are at Mavinga; they have no interest in giving their lives for this government."

Savimbi laughs often and heartily, and one of his most engaging traits as a human being is a tendency to be charitable toward his rivals. Holden Roberto, he said, is "the father of all Angolan nationalists and should be included in any coalition government that might emerge from this war." Neto, while "wrongheaded in his policies," had been "a fine poet and a distinguished statesman."

Savimbi said he reads Clausewitz and von Moltke, and lists Douglas MacArthur, Lord Montgomery of El Alamein and Robert E. Lee among his heroes.

Savimbi, in his 1979 trip to Washington (he'll soon make another, and there is talk he may be received by President Reagan), conferred with Senators Henry Jackson, Sam Nunn and Paul Tsongas; Speaker of the House "Tip" O'Neill; former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger; former CIA director James Schlesinger; AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland and members of the congressional Black Caucus.

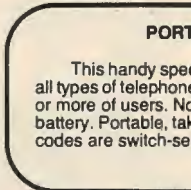
Savimbi is not without his detractors in the West. John Stockwell, former chief of the CIA's Angola Task Force in 1975-76, now a critic of the Agency,

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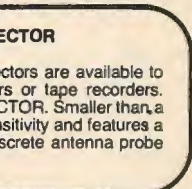
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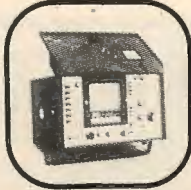
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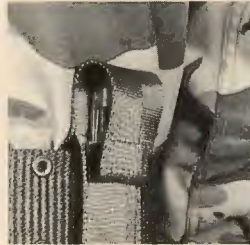
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stated (in a letter to the editor of the "New York Times" on 22 November 1979):

"Savimbi has no ideology. He believes in nothing beyond his own selfish ambition, and fighting has become his way of life. Over the years in central Angola, he has fought against the Portuguese, the MPLA, SWAPO and the Cubans. A perennial loser, he has held his own only against the FNLA."

There is something in what Stockwell says, but very little. Indeed, the former CIA operative was extremely generous to Savimbi in his earlier book, "In Search of Enemies." Sour grapes make bitter wine.

Savimbi's ideology is difficult to pin down, and seems largely based on his friend Leopold Senghor's philosophy of negritude, which can be summed up as a respect for African traditions and culture. Since his relations with Peking are old and warm, he can hardly be described as a visceral anticommunist. What he is opposed to is imperialism, the chief practitioners of which in Africa happen to be the Russians, East Germans and Cubans.

He feels an affinity with the West, and has a predisposition toward free enterprise. But he feels that African institutions, if they are to be successful, must be based on African realities (were he to come to power, he would favor a mixture of capitalism and socialism).

Savimbi is, in short, what most African leaders are: a pragmatic nationalist who takes his friends where he can find them. He will do whatever is necessary — including dealing with the South Africans — to achieve his goal of a truly independent Angola, free of all foreign troops.

That fighting has become "a way of life" for Savimbi ought to be regarded as an asset rather than a liability in an anti-Soviet leader. As to his being a "perennial loser," Savimbi points out that he's still in the field, adding that "with friends like Stockwell, who would not be a loser?"

It is true that the lightly armed UNITA troops have not been able to stand up to the Cubans, backed by Russian armor and jets, in set-piece battles. But as Mavinga illustrates, Savimbi's 16,000 troops are the best African army in Angola, and growing stronger every day.

Savimbi clearly is no coward. While his friend, King Hassan of Morocco, has provided him with a villa outside Rabat, he tries to spend 10 months out of the year in Angola, living just as his men do. "They need me here," he says, "and, besides, it's safer for me in Angola than abroad."

But UNITA agents, traveling on diplomatic passports provided by friendly African nations (Savimbi paid

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incognito visits to a dozen such states last year), shuttle between Paris and Peking, Rome and Bonn, London and Washington, in search of understanding and support. And, as the mood in the West becomes more realistic in its view of the Soviet Union's grand design, Savimbi is taking an increasingly personal role in these initiatives.

If ever there is to be a place and a time to end the lengthening string of communist victories and Western defeats, the place could be Angola and the time 1981. With Savimbi in the field and Reagan in the White House, the West has a second chance now in Africa. But as I shook hands with Savimbi and boarded the blacked-out plane that was to fly me out of UNITA-held territory, I was by no means sure that there are men of sufficient daring in Washington to seize the opportunity bought for us with the blood of Angolans willing to fight to be free.

A week after my clandestine visit to Angola, I found myself passing through East Berlin in transit from Warsaw to Bucharest.

"Have you anything to declare?" inquired the East German customs official who, for all I knew, might have a brother serving in Angolan counter-intelligence.

"Not at the moment," I replied.



## RECON

Continued from page 51

The jungle grew steadily denser and the going got tougher, but still no one said anything. Reconns are serious about noise discipline. In fact, they are serious about everything they do, which had impressed me ever since I had first written about them. They do things well just because they believe things should be done well, an attitude that is rare in today's soldiers.

I remembered being in the jungle of Panama a couple of years ago with an Army infantry outfit on what they hoped was an ambush. They were a sorry bunch who coughed, sneezed, dropped canteens and cleared their throats until the forest sounded like a bad night on a tuberculosis ward. They might as well have put an air-raid siren and flashing lights in the middle of their position. They just didn't believe they might have to go to war.

The ground sloped upward and the terrain continued to get worse. I could see nothing in the darkness but odd patches of pale green light — a dim undefined glow that danced and jittered in the blackness ahead. Something crackled and shrieked in the bush, a macabre sound that can

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terrify people new to the jungle.

My foot broke through a rotting log into the moist pulp within. The strange luminescence moved in circles, slid deliberately from side to side, vanished without a trace and appeared again farther ahead. It was the color of foxfire, the glowing fungus of rotting wood in the Virginia forests — but decaying wood doesn't dance around. Maybe I was losing my mind. It's a hazard in this job.

Finally it dawned on me: radium dials of diving watches. The team leaders were controlling our advance by giving silent arm and hand signals with their watches. I asked Lt. Houston about it. Since he and I were observers and not really there, we could whisper.

"Yeah, that's right. They may look bright, but they really aren't. If an enemy got close enough to see them, they'd hear our noise anyway. If we make contact, we cover them up and break off."

Breaking off is a Recon specialty. The Marine Corps does not make a habit of training its best men to avoid combat, but Recon's job is strictly reconnaissance — sneak in, draw pictures and go home. If they have to use their weapons, they have screwed up. They don't carry a full combat load of ammunition.

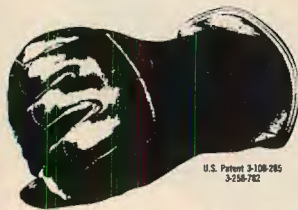
The pitch of the ground increased sharply again and the going went from rough to ridiculous. A wall of wrist-thick vines barred our way, tough ropes hanging everywhere in the night. Moving forward became a crazy ballet through an unseen obstacle course. I ducked beneath a vine that caught me on the Adam's apple, a leafy cord that tried to loop around my neck, found another below it, tried to step around it and got my leg caught between two fallen logs. Briars tore at my left leg. Unable to think of anything brighter to do, I raised my other leg over as much of the unyielding tangle as possible and, both feet off the ground, surfed over it.

I landed on the lip of a gully. While I was pulling myself over a rock, a huge insect landed on my earlobe. I spasmodically slapped it hard enough to kill a small dog — it was about the size of a small dog — before it could start eating. Ahead of me, I heard Marines struggling through more of the same. We climbed up a steep bank, slithered on hands and knees beneath a dense mesh of branches and crawled on our bellies under more vines. After a while you learn to feel your way, to judge which direction the vines will run and flow with them.

Finally, we neared the crest of the

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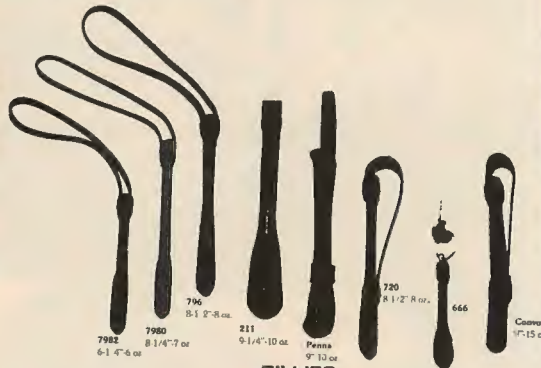
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hill. The trees thinned slightly. We stopped. Lt. Houston told me to sit down and relax while the team set up security and did preliminary recon of the objective, actually a coastal gun position. I found a soft bed of rotting mould and sat, hoping the local ants were asleep.

Standards change quickly in the bush. Normally, no reasonable person would think of wandering lightless in that tangled hothouse at night, much less of casually sitting in it, but Recons roll in it as if it were a suburban backyard. They don't have much choice. The air was muggy, heavy with water. Insects fized and buzzed. The soft stench of rotting vegetation hung in the dead air. I could hear the team moving quietly, but couldn't see much.

"They're moving up the Starlight scope," Lt. Houston whispered. A shape, barely distinguishable from the surrounding gloom, brushed silently past with the Starlight. It was the clumsy AN/PBS-2A. SOF has the improved, much lighter Litton M-845 Nightscope at the office for sport shooting. Magazines should not be better equipped than the military.

I borrowed the Starlight, propped it on my knees and pushed the soft rubber shroud against my eye. Compressing the rubber opens a slit which is normally closed to keep the bright green eye of the scope from giving away a position. A ghostly green circle opened before me and sparkled like a snowy television screen. The gun position was clearly visible, a large concrete cylinder with a gaping black square at the bottom: the tunnel into the innards.

When my knee jiggled, the stars above the gun tub spun crazily and left smudgy green streaks on the phosphor. I couldn't see anything in the surrounding growth — no guards put there to complicate the mission — but it wasn't easy to be sure. Starlight scopes are a lot better than nothing, but the ghostly green can be deceptive.

Crouched over instinctively, we moved forward to the yawning mouth of the tunnel. Someone had already sketched the outside of the old fortification, working quickly with a red-lensed flashlight. "It's not easy to do," Gunny McWhorter told me later. "Things don't look the same at night. It takes a lot of practice to do it right."

A security force stayed outside in the wan starlight while a scout team entered the tunnel. All of this happened quickly, without a lot of conversation. These guys were good. The air was musty and smelled of bat droppings. A boot occasionally

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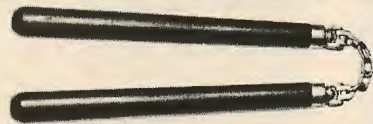
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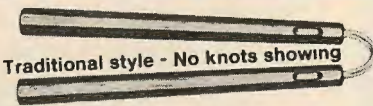


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scraped on loose gravel but, otherwise, the only sound was the shrieking of insects.

The red glow of hooded flashlights moved eerily over the walls. The team leaders cautiously led their men deeper into the tunnel. The idea was to reconnoitre the place and get out before an enemy could show up and trap us inside, a prospect that made me glad we weren't really on some forsaken Cuban hillside. Big holes several feet deep opened unexpectedly in the floor, offering to break a leg. The soft thud of bootfalls seemed loud in the enclosed space and the clank of scrap metal, which littered the floor, echoed for long seconds. I waited to step on some exotic and highly poisonous snake, but my real worry was that a rabid bat might decide I was good to eat — it happens — after which I would need 30 years of shots in the belly with a five-inch needle, or whatever it is they do.

Smaller teams broke off down side corridors, sometimes hugging the walls and skirting holes on six-inch ledges. Marines with tape measures quickly measured distances from corridor to corridor, the width of the tunnel, the length, height and number of rooms, and positions of holes. Others examined trash and debris strewn on the floor. A lot can be learned from trash. When we went back, the team would be able to draw a blueprint of the position.

"This is a good confidence-builder," Houston whispered. "If guys can wander around a dark tunnel like this, they can do just about anything."

I wasn't sure they needed any more confidence. Anyone who can lock out of a submarine's escape trunk — a tiny, water-filled coffin — isn't likely to get a Section Eight over a tunnel in Puerto Rico. Still, there is something to what Houston says: Much of Recon training involves doing things that go against natural instinct. Men who don't practice may hesitate.

Fifteen minutes later we finished. Team leaders gathered briefly in the devilish red gleam of the flashlights to be sure they had everything they needed. We crossed the clearing and began the long struggle back through the jungle. When we got to the beach, five hours after we started, the moon would be rising and the partisan boats waiting.

## GUNS AND GEAR

Interview with 1st Lt. Floyd  
Houston, Intelligence Officer  
2nd Force Recon

SOF: What's your strength?

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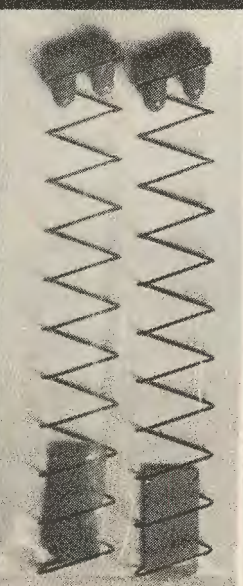
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**HOUSTON:** About 142 Marines and officers. We have six operational platoons of 12 men each, with each platoon divided into three teams of four men. Each platoon also has a platoon sergeant, an equipment NCO and the platoon commander. And then there is Headquarters and Service Platoon, with the S2, S3, XO, CO, supply officer and a communications officer. We rate 11 officers.

**SOF: Why is your basic operating unit a four-man team?**

**HOUSTON:** The decision was made before my time. I'm convinced we need six-man teams.

**SOF: Why is six better than four?**

**HOUSTON:** We need more men to provide security and carry gear on missions. With six men we can send people to schools, send them on leave. Everybody rates 30 days of leave a year. You take one man out of a four-man team and you've cut your strength by 25 percent, whereas one man out of a six-man team drops your strength only around 17 percent.

**SOF: What command does Recon come under?**

**HOUSTON:** We're under the administrative control of 2nd Force Service Support Group. But operational control is with the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Atlantic. In wartime, we would work for FMF Atlantic or 2nd Marine Amphibious Force.

**SOF: What physical qualifications do candidates have to have?**

**HOUSTON:** To get into the operating platoons, they have to have a 250 or above on the physical-fitness test, be first-class swimmers and be qualified to pass the physical requirements of jump school and scuba school, which are fairly demanding. The physical-fitness test is Marine-wide, involving three events. First, pull-ups; you can do 20 pull-ups for a max of 100 points. Then there is the sit-up test. To max it you have to do 80 sit-ups in two minutes for a total of 100 points. You can still pass it with less than that, but I'm talking about a maximum of 300 points. And then a three-mile run in 18 minutes, which is the maximum and will give you 100 points. We require 250 out of 300, which on the average means between 15 and 20 pull-ups, between 75 and 80 sit-ups and between 18 and 21 minutes on the three-mile run.

**SOF: How is the four-man team organized?**

**HOUSTON:** There is the team leader, who's responsible for everything the team does, the assistant team leader and two recon scouts. One of them is also a radio operator.

**SOF: What is their training?**

**HOUSTON:** The team leader has been around Recon for a while. He's a sergeant, has probably jumped scuba, is possibly HALO-qualified, probably is

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**SOF: Equipment?**

**HOUSTON:** Depends on the mission. Usually we go out with a Car-15 or an XM177E2, the short M16, two M16s and an M203. The M203 is the M16 with a 40mm grenade launcher that slides forward and back. Those are the basic weapons. Some people carry pistols too, the standard M1911 Colt .45 — although it is personal preference to carry one.

**SOF: You use standard gear?**

**HOUSTON:** Yes, with the addition of the back packs. Often we get the large Alice packs. A whole lot of people come up with their own equipment, like Randall knives, although we do issue Ka-Bars and bayonets.

**SOF: Can the men carry other pistols?**

**HOUSTON:** It depends on the CO. I'd say no. You can't supply a .357 or a .44 mag in the field. But the gear we use depends on the mission and teams.

**SOF: How do you keep weapons working in salt water?**

**HOUSTON:** We use a substance called Break Free. It's a heavy oil. We fully coat the weapon inside and out. Then we wipe it down so that the coating isn't so heavy that sand accumulates on the oil. We clean and oil the weapons while they're warm. The metal has pores and oil will soak into them. After we come out of the salt water, we give them a fresh-water rinse-down — preferably hot water — and then dry them while they're hot, and then oil them down again.

**SOF: Do you use Starlight scopes regularly?**

**HOUSTON:** Roger that, and Metascopes also. The Metascope is an infra-red signalling device. It has an infra-red generator which transmits an infra-red beam and an infra-red receiver. It's not great for observing things at a distance, but you can focus it to read a map, depending on the IR intensity.

**SOF: What boats do you use?**

**HOUSTON:** We have been using the IBS, the Inflatable Boat, Small. It carries seven people and a coxswain. However, they are being phased out in favor of the MARS (Marine Amphibious Reconnaissance System — see "IBS Goes to MARS," SOF, December '80), which is a lot better. Instead of being all rubber, it has a metal keelson, which is a big tube that breaks down into sections and goes in the center of the boat to give it sea-keeping qualities. The keelson keeps you from being blown sideways. It's engineered for operating on the high seas. We used one in Norway with a 35-horsepower motor. They're coming out with a 35-horsepower motor which you can submerge in seawater. It has purge valves through the pistons so that you can purge out the seawater. People down in Panama City have tested them

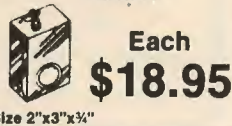
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down to 500 feet. When they brought them up after three days, they started. The sound is muffled. The ones that are coming out soon are supposed to be really quiet.

**SOF: Parachutes?**

**HOUSTON:** The basic static-line parachute is the MC1-1 Bravo. It's a steerable canopy with modified toggles for steering, plus it's got an anti-inversion net around the side which eliminates a lot of malfunctions. I've never seen a major static-line malfunction in the company. We do have HALO capability. Because we have the only HALO people in the Marine Corps, we've been used to test various systems, such as square chutes. We figure on using the squares for offset insertion: you open the chute at 30,000 feet in oxygen and fly sideways to your objective. In sport jumping from 12,500 feet with a round parachute, I've gone 12 miles and still had time to circle over the drop zone a couple of times. From 30,000 feet you can offset in excess of 30 miles. It's critical to calculate the layers of wind. You fly the wind layers. Say there's a layer of wind at 30,000 feet; you fly that layer, then you break through and there's another layer going another direction.

**SOF: What is the usual training for Recons?**

**HOUSTON:** The three biggies are jump school, scuba school and Ranger school. Not everybody goes to Ranger school, although I'd say most of the NCOs have. Ranger school is a really tough patrolling school and most people who complete it are good Marines. We use them in leadership billets. We also go to the HALO school, and different types of scuba schools. There's the SF Scuba School down in Key West, which is basically a combat-swimmers' school, then there are the Navy schools at Groton, Conn. and Panama City, Fla., which they are hoping to develop into a combat-swimmers' school for all the services. We go to Pathfinder school. There are some schools that I can't talk about. We send people to demolitions school. I've even sent people through intelligence-photography school.

**SOF: What cameras do you use?**

**HOUSTON:** The Nikons, although we're testing some more land-oriented cameras. The Nikonos is pretty rugged, but using it requires a great deal of experience. We have some very experienced operators, but sometimes you don't always have the luxury of getting somebody who's so good he can get a good photograph every time.

**SOF: Why do you use the UDT life jacket instead of a BC?**

**HOUSTON:** Navy regs.

**SOF: What is your standard regulator?**

**HOUSTON:** U.S. Divers single-hose. We don't use any closed-circuit gear,  
*Continued on page 86*



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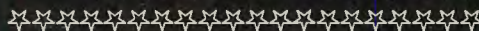
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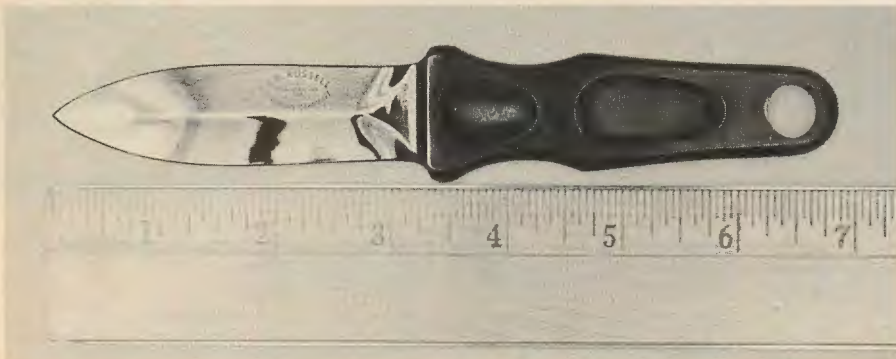
Three versions of the Sting. Sting 1a in stainless steel (left), original model with micarta scales (center) and black chrome (right).

# STING FOR SURVIVAL

## A.G. Russell's All-Around Edge

Text & Photos  
by Dick Eades

Sting 1a, just under seven inches long, packs a lot of utility into a small package.



**"SURVIVAL knife."** It's a term applied indiscriminately to almost anything with a blade. Those words can evoke mental pictures of anything from a tiny penknife to a blade the size of a Roman broadsword. Just what exactly is a "survival knife?"

I guess it depends on what you are trying to survive. If it's a charge of Comanche warriors, make mine 12 feet long with a suit of armor attached. Otherwise, I prefer one of reasonable size for easy portability.

There are many criteria for selecting a survival knife but, since my knowledge of knives is limited, I choose strictly on a subjective basis.

First, the knife I pick must be small enough to be easily carried but large enough to be used for the everyday jobs one might encounter. It must be durable

enough to take a fair share of abuse as well as hard use. After all, I'll have to call on it to perform some rather unknife-like chores. It must be capable of holding an edge and not prone to rust if neglected for a few days.

If those sound like impossible demands, you haven't met A.G. Russell. A.G. is the "Knife Man" of Springdale, Ark., who designed and produces a knife like the one described. It's called the Sting, and is available at a reasonable price direct from Russell or from your local dealer.

Russell introduced the original Sting several years ago. I first saw it at a show in 1977. I was immediately fascinated by the little knife. It features a spear-blade 3.25 inches long and about .9 inches wide at the widest point. The overall length is just under 6.5 inches. The knife is a single piece of forged steel with ivory-micarta scales riveted to the grip.

For a decorative touch, the ivory is outlined in red where it meets the steel. Not a garish band of red, just a fine line to contrast the ivory and polished steel. With the ivory-micarta grip, the Sting weighs only three ounces.

A boot/belt sheath is furnished with the Sting. It's heavy leather with a spring clip suitable for wear inside the boot or attached to a waist belt. Thanks to the shape of the spring clip and a unique locking mechanism, it grips well enough to stay put under almost any circumstances. I don't recall standing on my head while wearing mine, but I have put it through almost every other type of gyration and it has ridden right along.

When sheathed, the Sting protrudes a scant 2.25 inches above the leather. There's enough knife sticking out to grasp easily but not enough to be obtrusive.

Both edges of the Sting are razor sharp from bolster to tip. It's not a knife to play with unless you have suicidal tendencies. The pommel is a simple, polished dome, shaped from the tang and part of the same piece of steel that is forged into the blade.

All in all, I have been pleased with the Sting as a go-everywhere, do-everything knife. With the exception of the micarta scales, the knife is all but indestructible. For those who must have a knife that will resist everything but the fires of hell, Russell now produces another version — the Sting 1a.

Although it is an offspring of the original, there are a few differences. The grip length on the Sting 1a has been increased by about .375 inch, making the overall length about 6.85 inches. There are no scales on the Sting 1a, but the flat sides of the tang are shaped to provide a positive grip. An indentation just behind the bolster accommodates the thumb when the blade is held flat.

A hole about 1/2 inch in diameter is located at the rear of the grip. Many users will probably elect to fasten a thong to the knife through this hole, although I prefer to leave it open to provide the flattest configuration possible for carrying the Sting 1a. Speaking of flat: without scales, the knife is only .330 inch thick at the grip. It weighs just under four ounces.

The Sting 1a is offered in three different finishes. The standard finish is polished, stainless steel. The blade polish is brilliant and the grip is a pleasing satin with matte surfaces in the grip indentations. The contrasting surface textures make it a very attractive knife. For those who prefer something a bit dressier, the knife is available in the same polish pattern but coated with a distinctive gold chrome.

Frankly, with the gold finish it no longer looks business-like and seems too pretty to use. A third variety holds much more appeal: The same polish job is finished with an inky-black chrome. Black chrome lends itself well to a knife of this type. It tones down shine, adds a bit of class to an otherwise plain knife and is almost as durable as the stainless steel.

Back to the question of whether the



The Sting fits nicely under light trousers in boot top. Spring steel clip provides sufficient tension for secure carry.



Cutting limb from a dead tree takes awhile with the Sting, but the little knife remains sharp through several inches of wood.



Sting is poor can opener except when it's the only one you have. It stays "shavin' sharp" after opening can.

Sting is a good selection for a survival knife. I'm sure that some are already shaking their heads sadly at my choice. Many will say it's too small. Others will complain that the Sting is too light, the grip too short and that it should have only one sharp edge or needs a saw-toothed edge.

Hell! I'll agree with all of that! In fact, I could probably name a dozen cases where the Sting wouldn't rate as the *best* tool for a *specific* job. I like it because it is capable of doing a myriad of jobs adequately and because it is small enough to always be with me if I need it.

Knife lovers will probably cringe to find what I've done with my Sting. I've used it to cut small limbs for firewood, open cans and to dig up flat rocks for a fire base. Frankly, an axe would have worked better for the firewood, a can opener on the can and a shovel would have been a far better choice for digging up the rocks. There was just one problem . . . I didn't have an axe, can opener or shovel. If I had, I'd have used them instead of the Sting.

My Sting and I have been in some interesting places. Frankly, I don't know why I put up with the darn thing. People stare when I use it as a steak knife in a fancy restaurant.

It's not the best choice for dressing a deer. (That double-edge invariably slices into the guts.)

Paring citrus fruits and forgetting to clean it dulls the blade polish slightly.

The pommel makes only a fair nutcracker and the point just barely suffices as a screwdriver for eyeglass repair.

The Sting is tough enough to stand up to all these uses, and many more that I haven't thought of yet. The blade stays sharp under hard use and can be resharpened easily and quickly. It's reasonably priced and can be replaced with little pain if it's lost or damaged beyond repair. There are no frills on the Sting; no bells or whistles. It's just a good, honest boot- or belt-knife at an affordable price.

The Sting isn't worth a damn as a complete tool kit, but it makes a workable substitute for the 63-pound tool box that you don't have with you when you need it. That's about all you can ask of a small survival knife, Sting included.

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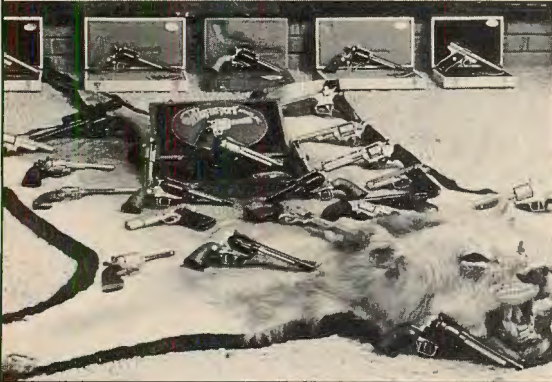
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### RECON

Continued from page 83

so a lot of the air systems we use are civilian.

**SOF: Radios?**

**HOUSTON:** Our primary radio is the URC 87, a high-frequency radio which can transmit both voice and CW (morse code). We've had some really good luck with square antennas, what you call a field-expedient rhomboid. With the rhomboid we can get a little more directionality. We've gotten even better results than with dipoles.

**SOF: How do you waterproof your electronic gear for missions?**

**HOUSTON:** Different people have different systems. There is no Mark One box for putting these things in and locking them out of a sub. Basically, it's whatever works.

**SOF: How about your underwater communications gear?**

**HOUSTON:** None. The only things we use along those lines are calypso sticks. They look like copper pipes tied together. We use them in lieu of ping-ers to notify sonar of our location.

**SOF: Could you use the little sonar transmitters that civilian divers use to mark wrecks and good fishing spots?**

**HOUSTON:** I'm sure we could. The problem is that a lot of these things are high-tech gear. They require specialized maintenance, and with a 140- to 150-man organization, it's tough to maintain a lot of gear like that. We use our gear hard and we don't have an unlimited budget. If a specific mission required such gear, I'm sure we could get it.

**SOF: How long are your missions?**

**HOUSTON:** I've been on a 22-day patrol. It all depends on what's required to do the job.

**SOF: What living equipment do you carry?**

**HOUSTON:** I've never carried a tent. They're too heavy and don't serve more than one role. I bring two ponchos and civilian bungee cord. I'll string a hootch with the bungee cord, lay my poncho out on the deck and, if it's cold enough for a sleeping bag, I'll put it under the poncho. If it's not that cold, I'll use the poncho liner. The main thing is to travel as light as you can.

**SOF: How light on a 22-day mission?**

**HOUSTON:** The average weight of our packs was about 90 pounds. On a 22-day mission, you've got a serious logistics problem. Food was our big weight. We had Cs initially. Later on we were resupplied with LURPs. To tell you the truth, although LURPs are easier to carry, when it comes to feeding yourself for a long time, they don't have the nutrition — plus you use a lot of water in them. It takes the better part of a canteen to eat a single LURP. That's a major factor, especially if



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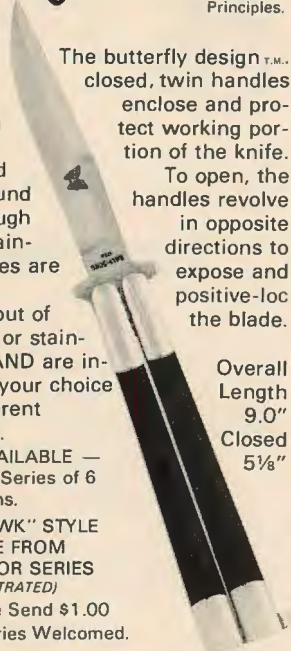
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**SOF: Can you live off the land?**  
**HOUSTON:** No. You'd find yourself spending more time surviving than performing the mission. If you're busy looking for food, then you're not looking for the enemy. You've got to have your food, and you've got to be able to eat it in a few minutes. You can't spend time chopping up coconuts.

We have to carry everything we need for a long patrol. We happen to have a lot of very strong people, but they're not supposed to fight. They're supposed to avoid all contact with the enemy. Frankly, we don't carry enough ordinance to become a maneuver element. We operate beyond fire support. The only thing we could possibly get would be air support, and you can't count on air support all the time; planes may be down, weather may be bad. Our weapons are supposed to help us break contact, evade the enemy and report on him. We're the only long-range ground-reconnaissance organization in the Department of Defense. Demolitions is a secondary mission, and it's not a very good one. If there's a lucrative target out there that cannot be gotten by other means, the company can task-organize to get it.

**SOF: What psychological types do you find in Recon?**

**HOUSTON:** They're pretty strong-willed men — like Teddy Roosevelt — rugged individualists. They work well in a group. I can't really put them in a mold. No two are exactly alike, but I'd say they're all pretty much rugged individuals.

**SOF: Are they looking for a challenge?**

**HOUSTON:** Oh sure, all of them are. I can speak best for myself. I was looking for a real challenge and I found it — this is a great outfit. I wouldn't trade it for the world.

**SOF: How long have you been in Recon and what have you done?**

**HOUSTON:** About a year and eight months. I was jump-qualified when I came to the unit. I picked up gear Friday, jumped into the North Carolina mountains on Monday. I hadn't done a military jump for three years. Then I went through the water-safety-survival instructors' course, which was probably the best water school I've ever heard of. That was a month long. Then I went to HALO school, also a month long. Then I came down to Puerto Rico for a month, and that brought me up to Christmas. On 1 January, I hopped on a plane and went to the Norwegian infantry-officer school in Norway. That was a six-week school. I went through the SF scuba school and, from there, I had a month in the rear. Then I went to Germany for a month-long operation, came back, ran local

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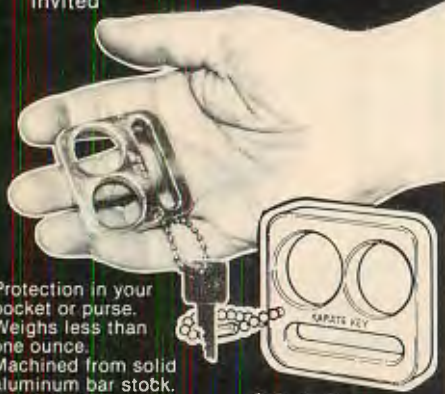
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patrols around Camp Lejeune for a while, then started mark-ups for the NATO float to Norway — Operation Teamwork '80. Then we were deployed for a three-month float to Norway. I got back in November. From then to December, we stood an inspector-general's inspection; then Christmas leave again. After that, I took a detachment out to the Sierra Nevadas for a month of cold-weather training; then down here for special ops with the Navy.

**SOF: Is this typical?**

**HOUSTON: Yes.**

**SOF: Officers usually have a three-year tour in Recon and then they're out?**

**HOUSTON: Yes,** although you might possibly come back for follow-on tours. It's not the greatest thing for an officer's career. For example, Capt. Nelson had done three tours in Recon. He's been passed over for major and he wants to get out. [Editor's note: Everyone with whom I spoke in the company agreed with Houston.] I can't speak for the MC, but he's about the finest commanding officer I've ever worked for. And he has to get out — not retirement, just separation — after 12 years in the Marine Corps, a Vietnam tour and a lot of hard work and dedication.

**SOF: How long do average enlisted guys spend in Recon?**

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HOUSTON: A three-year tour, then something else. Then they will find their way back into Recon if they stay in and show desire to. Most all of our gunnies have been in Recon before. What they do is space it out with a tour in Recon, then a tour with the grunts, then a tour in the drill field, then a tour in Recon.

### SOF: Why?

HOUSTON: There's a trade-off. You lose touch with the rest of the MC. Let's face it, we're all one big jockstrap. Everybody who isn't in the infantry is there to support the infantry. We're not an army unto ourselves. Everybody in the MC, including pilots, truck drivers, tankers, amtracker artillerymen and reconnaissance people — we're all just one big jockstrap. Even pilots serve with the ground forces — the MC is special in this. Pilots serve FMF tours where they're flying; then they'll serve tours with an infantry battalion as the forward air controller, being the battalion commander's adviser on calling in air strikes and air support. The same with infantrymen and artillerymen throughout the MC. We can't afford to become branch conscious because the MC's a small unit.

### SOF: Do people want to get out rather than leave Recon?

HOUSTON: As I said, there's no such thing as a typical man. Some people came in primarily for the challenges that Recon offers, and other people came in to be career Marines. To be a career Marine, they buy the whole package. There are the good tours, and then there are the less-glamorous ones. I served a year doing lines-of-communication analysis in a service support group. It didn't do me any harm and it was good for the MC. It gave me a great deal of patience, even though there wasn't a great deal of personal satisfaction. What I'm trying to avoid is building us up as Popski's private army, or a place where someone can hide throughout his entire career. It's not that way. We're Marines first, and we all belong to the Commandant.

—F.R.



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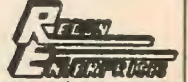
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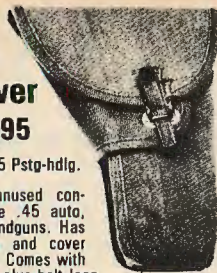
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## BULLETIN BOARD

by Bob Poos

Continued from page 66

anyone who might like to comment on the subject or has research material available.

### 303RD BOMB GROUP ...

The 303rd Bomb Group (H) Association is looking for WWII airmen who served with it in Molesworth, England, 1942-1945.

The Association's purpose is to assist in contacting former friends, receiving news of the 303rd reunions and maintaining the 303rd's active status.

Many former 303rders may not have heard of its reformation. Former members are asked to contact Joseph Vieira, 6400 Park Street, Hollywood, FL 33024, for further information.

### SIX-YEAR PLAN ...

Army officials are contemplating a six-year-tour-of-duty enlistment.

It is part of the Reagan administration's plan to hold down the staggering costs of the all-volunteer Army. The theory is that, after a six-year hitch, only the best of soldiers would remain in the service, and those retained would become the sergeants needed to train and command younger troops.

Army hitches now are of three- or four-years' duration.

Pay would also be raised and free college education offered. Even with those additional costs, White House budget experts predict the Pentagon could save \$10 billion to \$15 billion a year.

### HONOR ROLL OMISSIONS ...

Dick Reich and Chuck Darnell of the Special Forces Assn. have discovered that certain Special Forces troopers killed in Southeast Asia are not eligible for the SF honor roll at Fort Bragg, N.C. Most of them were in Special Operations units in Laos or were working for the CIA in that country.

Darnell said a check with the Army revealed that regulations say a man had to be assigned to the 5th Special Forces Group to be eligible for the honor roll. Some men in SOG or seconded to the Agency were not technically in the 5th.

The Association plans to appoint a committee to look into the matter and come up with a resolution.

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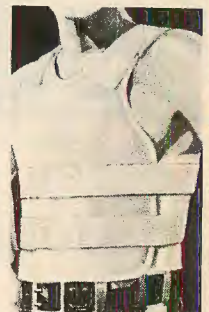
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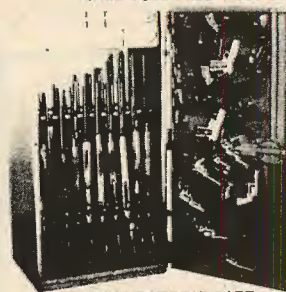
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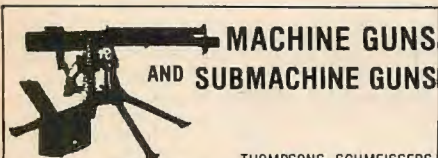
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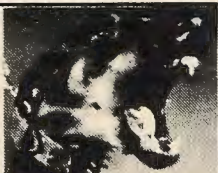
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## TEACHING IVAN MANNERS ...

American defense planners would do well to heed the advice of a retired British Royal Navy admiral on how to deal with the Russians — at least on the high seas.

Sir Raymond Lygo, one-time captain of the British carrier, *Ark Royal*, says, "The Soviets will always put a toe on the line you draw and then take one step over it."

While he was skipper of the *Ark Royal*, the carrier was being harassed by Russian spy trawlers cutting across the big ship's bow, despite repeated rules-of-the-road warnings.

Finally Lygo said, "Oh, the hell with it," and ran one of them down.

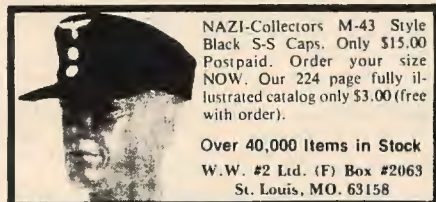
The screechers from Moscow were furious and diplomats scurried about London.

But Russian trawlers never badgered *Ark Royal* again.

## WHERE ARE YOU? ...

Reader Eric C. Sanders would like to hear from anyone who served with him in Vietnam. He was in the recon platoon of HHC, 502nd Airborne Infantry, First Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

He may be reached by writing to him at 819 Washington St., Brookhaven, MS 39601.



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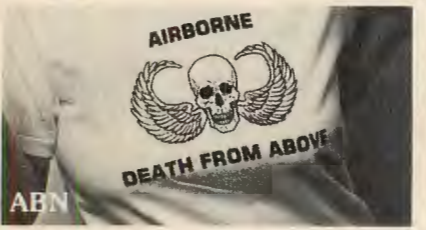
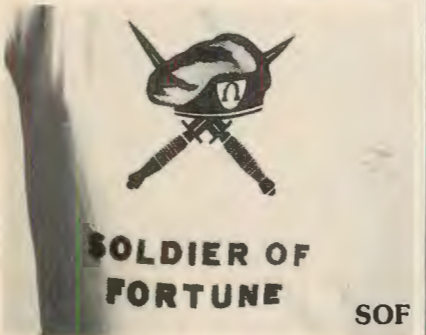
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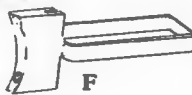
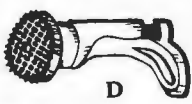
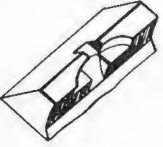
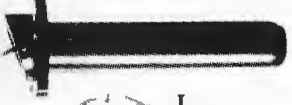
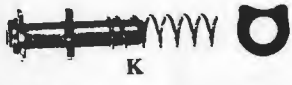
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